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WEEKLY

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GST INCLUSIVE

BLOCKBUSTER DERBY STILL A PROSPECT

By Bert van Bedaf

The home legs of the NSL elimination finals in Melbourne finished convincingly for South Melbourne but less so for the Melbourne Knights.

However the prospect of the Knights and South playing each other in the cut-throat NSL elimination final in a fortnight look as good as any - if you take Knights captain-coach Andrew Marth's word for it.

If both Melbourne clubs win through, it will set up a red hot, minor semi (or elimination) final on the week ending April 28.

The Melbourne clubs haven't met in the finals since their memorable grand final in 1991 at Olympic Park. South won 5-4 on penalties after Marth had scored in the 25th minute and Joe Palatsides equalized in the 88th minute.

Just over 23,000 spectators witnessed the amazing shoot-out.

While South Melbourne looked comfortable in their 2-0 win against Brisbane Strikers, the Knights labored towards a

scoreless draw with Olympic Sharks, but the Melbourne side still has everything to play for.

South travels to Brisbane with a two-goal cushion and feels that XXXX coming on. The Knights will need to cast a tight net to



All Smiles at Bob Jane Stadium as Vaughan Coveny celebrates one of two goals in last week's Elimination Final.

clinch a score draw to go through. A one-all would be enough to get them across the line.

Hence, a fairytale blockbuster derby between Melbourne's rivals cannot be easily dismissed. It is hanging in the balance like a Circus Oz trapeze act.

The Knights beat the Sharks 1-0 in Sydney in round 3 last October and venture the thought of repeating the feat. Marth was confident about the away leg.

"Our away form has been better than our home form, so I'm quite confident of going to Sydney and playing for a win. I don't have major concerns with that," Marth said.

Olympic coach Gary Phillips also is quite happy with the state of play. It is after all only half time.

"I'm not unhappy with the result. Earlier in the week, I had already said it would come down to the second leg and it has," Phillips said.

South coach Eddie Krnecic is purring like a Cheshire cat. Soccer's flamboyant man of fashion simple said, "I think the two-goal lead should be enough."

But he vowed not to defend in Brisbane. "We don't play like that. We have a solid defence and we have enough players to score a goal or two away from home," Krnecic said.



Despair shown on the face of Andy Vargas, as the Knights failed to score a goal at home to the Sharks.

Brisbane coach John Kosmina remained defiantly confident he could pull a surprise at home. "We can turn the result around," Kosmina said.

This is the second season in a row that Melbourne's longest serving (and only) national soccer league teams have finished finals places to play off for the championship.

Last season minor premiers South Melbourne lost 2-1 to Wollongong Wolves in the grand final. The Melbourne Knights finished sixth and got past Perth Glory before being eliminated 1-0 by the Olympic Sharks.

South Melbourne president George Vasilopoulos said, "These are two very proud Melbourne teams that have won five championships in the last ten years," he said.

"It will be an interesting fortnight for Victorian soccer," Knights assistant coach Luciano Trani remarked.

"Hopefully, both teams can win through their elimination finals, which then sets up a blockbuster between the two clubs in the next stage," he said.

COACHES CAST REVERENCE BEFORE THE STORM

By Richard Kreider

The covers are off, the lines are drawn and all is in readiness for next Saturday's clash of the giants when minor-premiers Perth Glory take on top-six debutants Newcastle United in the first leg of the minor semi-final at Subiaco Oval.

Glory primed themselves for the vital encounter by hammering local State premier league side ECU Joondalup 10-0 at Perth Oval last Saturday morning with champion net buster Damian Mori demonstrating that he is currently in scintillating form by putting away six of the goals.

"That should keep him happy for the next few days because he gets grumpy if he doesn't find the net," quipped a relaxed Glory coach Mitch d'Avray.

Although you do expect to win these

games comfortably, it was pleasing to see some of the set pieces work out." It seems however, the coaching staff wasn't entirely satisfied with the result because the entire squad was sent jogging around the pitch and doing stretches immediately after the game.

"We are as ready as we'll ever be," said d'Avray who gave nothing away regarding final team selection, which he said will be done on the day of the big match which is expected to be played in front of over 30,000 fans. A little under 10,000 tickets were still available at the weekend although many are expected to be sold as the game hype intensifies throughout the week.

The only line-up concerns for Perth was with lethal frontman Bobby Despotovski who has been having sleepless nights due to his son Tomas having to undergo open-heart surgery but is now home and recuperating. Despotovski said his son, who was born only late last month, is now fine and he doesn't expect any further problems.

Meanwhile, d'Avray did say that he will not be treating the game any differently despite it being of a do-or-die scenario. "Why tinker and tamper with a successful recipe?" he said.



Ian Crook: Newcastle United coach.

"The terminology I have used for the Finals campaign in the past is that it is a lottery, but in reality it becomes a knock-out cup competition. So, on the day we have just got to be up to it and do the business," said d'Avray who discounted past conjecture about him preferring the Olympic Sharks in the major semi's.

"I've said in the past the focus always seemed to have been on the Sharks, even in the eastern states but Newcastle finished second and only lost two games all season," he said.

"We haven't managed to beat them this season so I think they are a team that have been successful and probably enjoyed the success as underdogs. No one has really given them a second thought; it's been about everyone else except Newcastle. When people were saying it was a toss-up between United and the Sharks as to who my preference would be, I actually said Newcastle will be more difficult to beat over two legs than any other team in the competition."

"If you are a bookie you would have had to go for the top-two to be in the final because they are the most consistent teams in the league," d'Avray then congratulated his counterpart Ian Crook for the achievement of finishing second in his debut season as a senior coach.

"Not bad considering the fact he didn't want to be a coach in the first place! Maybe after this success, he'll change his mind," d'Avray concluded.

Not to be outdone, Newcastle coach Ian Crook had some equally complimentary words to say about Saturday's opposition.

"I think their strength is their lack of weaknesses," said Crook. "I genuinely don't think you can look at the Perth side and say, 'Right, well, if we work hard this in this area and do better in that area we can win the game.' There are a lot of teams that you can look at it like that but I think the Perth side has got so many strengths and that's what makes them such a formidable outfit," he said.

Both d'Avray and Crook have each enjoyed top-flight football in England as players. D'Avray featured with Ipswich Town over a ten year period from 1981 and was ranked 76th in a newspaper poll early last year and Crook was the eighth player to make 400 appearances for Norwich City, also over a decade of seasons from 1986.



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BOSNICH'S BLAST

By Daniel Kuziow

The Socceroo's former first choice
goalkeeper and current Chelsea
reserve goalkeeper Mark Bosnich
has criticised Australia saying that the
Oceania champion doesn't deserve
direct entry to the World Cup.

His remarks came at a recent supporters'
function, where he said, "I'd love to
play in the World Cup for Australia but the
bottom line is this is where my bread and
butter is now and I will be living here after
my career is ended, so my most important
thing now is the Chelsea Football Club."

In committing to his current club,
Bosnich refined his criticisms of
Australian representation by admitting
Australia is like you're a married man and
you have a lover that comes every four
years and you go and see her and then you
come back and things aren't quite the
same.

"It's a really big interruption. A lot of
times in my career it's cost me.

"We'll never be a force because it's not
our national sport. Whether or not we'd be

in the World Cup, I don't know. I hope so,
but I don't know.

"For us to have an automatic spot from
Oceania would be cheating the rest of the
world."

"What they should do is scrap Oceania
and put them into Asia. That would be the
most simple thing."



Mark Bosnich: Former Australian
keeper has criticised Australia's
plans for a direct entry to the
World Cup.

CHIPPERFIELD THE HERO AS BASEL MOVE INTO FINAL

Scott Chipperfield was the hero for
FC Basel in their Swiss Cup semi-
final win against Young Boys
Berne.

In front of 25 000 fans, the Australia
international kept his nerve in a penalty
shoot-out, with his spot-kick clinching a
Cup final date with Grasshoppers.

Basel trainer Christian Gross lost fellow
Australian Ivan Ergic to injury just before
the game and Chipperfield was slotted into
the central midfield role, where he was
hugely influential in one of the most highly
charged matches of the Swiss season.

Basel took the lead through Gimenez in
the first-half before Young Boys midfielder
Joel Declaix drew the teams level six
minutes after half-time.

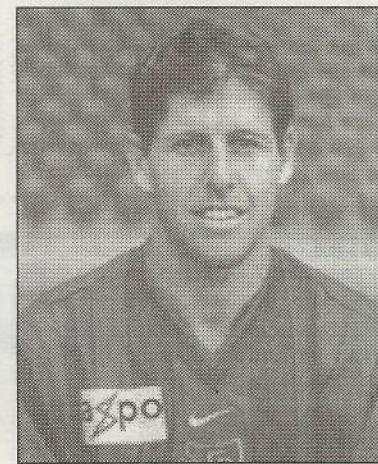
A menace to the opposing defences
Chipperfield's powerful run in the 73rd
minute was abruptly ended when he was
clattered over by Berne keeper Paolo
Collaviti, who was dismissed for the foul.

With scores locked at 1-1 after extra-
time, the match went into penalties.

Basel keeper Pascal Zuberhaller
appeared to have undone his good work,

missing his spot-kick at 3-3. But he made
amends seconds later, saving Johan
Berisha's effort to keep the scores level.

Then it was Chipperfield's turn, and he
made no mistake to win the shoot-out 4-3
and send his Basel team into the Swiss Cup
final - their first in 20 years.



Scott Chipperfield: The former
Wolves star is doing well for Swiss
side Basel.

ANDERLECHT SIGN ZANE AS PARMA SET UP DEAL FOR BRESCIANO

By Daniel Kuziow

Further to the reports in last week's
ABSW, Anderlecht have snapped up
Lillestrom striker Clayton Zane for a
cut-price £1.5 million.

The Australian centre forward agreed terms
with the Belgian outfit earlier in the week after
both clubs laid out details of the transfer over
the weekend.

The final hurdle to the deal centred around
whether Zane would play out the summer sea-
son in Norway commencing in a few weeks, or
if he would move to Belgium immediately and
play out the winter Eerste Klasse season.

It was decided that Zane will be allowed to
play 10 Tippeliga games with LSK before



Clayton Zane: From Lillestrom to
Anderlecht.

COSTANZO INTERESTED IN VIDMAR'S CITY

Out of contract Marconi
defender Angelo Costanzo has conceded
he would take a pay cut to play
for Aurelio Vidmar at Adelaide
City.

Vidmar is under consideration to
take over head coaching duties at
Adelaide City next season and
Costanzo admits he'd love to work
with his former teammate.

He told *The Advertiser*, "I think
Aurelio would be good for the club
and have the respect of everyone
because of his experience and what
he has achieved as a player."

"I would be happy to come back
and play under him, whether its
next season or the year after."

"Money is not an issue, its not
the most important thing. When I
went to Sydney it was also to
improve my chances of making the
Socceroos."



Angelo Costanzo: The Stallions star could
be on the move next season?

'AUSSIE' PETROVSKI IN MAGIC FORM

Sasho Petrovski sparked a second-half
comeback for Viborg against local
rivals Silkeborg in the Danish SAS
League overnight with the Aussie striker's
effort going down in the record books as
being the first home goal at the new Viborg
Stadium.

Petrovski began last night's game on the
bench after receiving a cork thigh against
Lyngby last Sunday.

With Viborg a goal down just before half-
time, head coach Soren Kusk threw Petrovski
into the fray and only two minutes after the
break, Petrovski pulled the scores level and
although Viborg conceded another goal in the
59th minute, Viborg managed to capture the
three points with two more goals in the 77th
and 82nd minutes.

Viborg now have 10 points from the last
12 and are closing the gap on teams above
them. Although still in eighth place, they are
within reach of UEFA Cup qualification.

Petrovski told *tribalfootball.com*: "I am
back. Even though I have been playing well
and creating a lot of chances, in recent weeks
the goals have dried up. It was starting to
affect my confidence even though I have
been through dry spells before."

"Last year at Wollongong I had a similar
run, then all of the sudden I burst the drought
and went onto to score 21 goals for the sea-
son."

"Last night's goal was very special for me
as it was the first goal at the new stadium. I
think that when the stadium is fully completed
it will be an intimidating place for visiting
teams. I think that now this club can rightfully
aim to play in European football and challenge
Brondby and FC Copenhagen as one of
Denmark's leading clubs."

"I am delighted for the fans as well. Since
our new ground has opened our crowds have
gone up considerably and will continue to
grow. They are very vocal and create a great
atmosphere for the team to play in."

"I now want to go on and keep my goal
tally growing."



Sasho Petrovski: In terrific form for
Viborg.

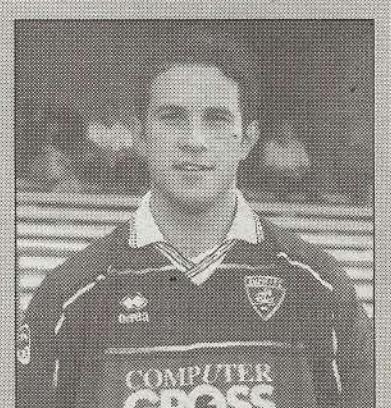
moving to his new club for pre-season training
in July.

Zane's success at LSK also attracted interest
from Fulham and Italian clubs Chievo Verona
and Verona.

In news from the Serie A, Parma look set to
beat Leeds for the signature of Empoli's Aussie
ace Marco Bresciano in a \$7.3 million transfer
deal.

While Empoli look to be Serie A bound, as
they lead the Serie B by two points with eight
matches remaining, the offer from Parma looks
to good to be true and is likely to be accepted
by the Tuscan club.

Bresciano has been in outstanding form for
Empoli this season and has attracted the
interest of Juventus and Inter Milan.



Marco Bresciano: Aussie star in
huge demand.



NSL'S NIGHT OF NIGHTS CANCELLED



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NSL Commission Chairman Remo Nogarotto has announced the cancellation of the NSL Awards Night gala function in light of Soccer Australia's financial situation.

The decision to break the annual tradition of these awards is designed to show that monies raised from the National Registration Fee are being used to stabilize the governing body and not been used on the costs associated with holding a black-tie function.

Mr Nogarotto said, "Obviously the cost saving, although budgeted, is substantial. We have a responsibility to ensure that Soccer Australia's finances are restored to a positive position as quickly as possible."

There was, however, an overwhelming factor in arriving at this decision.

"We believed that the significant cost of staging the event would have sent out the

wrong message to the mums and dads who are being asked to pay the increased registration levies for their children."

It is not known as to what will happen with the respective awards given to the players under such categories as: Player of the year, Coach of the year etc. However, Soccer Australia has informed the media that they will be presented an award hopefully before the seasons end.

In further off-field news, the NSL has responded to critics regarding the decision to play the South Melbourne and Marconi Stallions on the Friday night, instead of keeping with the design of playing all the Round 26 fixtures on the Sunday.

After consulting with all clubs at an NSL Commission meeting on March 14, Soccer Australia made this decision to satisfy a programming request of its television partner, Channel Seven, to hold a match on the Friday night.

Farina said his involvement

FARINA NAMED TELSTRA INTERNATIONAL AMBASSADOR

Soccer coach Frank Farina has been appointed ambassador for the Telstra International Soccer Expo which will be held at the State Sports Centre at Homebush Bay's Sydney's Olympic Park between May 17-19.

The Telstra International Soccer Expo is the showcase event for Australia's soccer industry and will feature special soccer exhibitors, specialist coaching clinics, heart pumping schools tournaments and guest appearances from international stars.

The Telstra International Soccer Expo is fully endorsed by Soccer Australia, the NSW Soccer Federation and the NSW Amateur Soccer Federation.

Telstra International Soccer Expo organizer, Carolyn Ledowsky, said Farina's appointment reflects the event's importance and level of support.

"The Telstra International Soccer Expo continues to be an very important event in the promotion of soccer in Australia," said Ms Ledowsky.

"No other sport in Australia conducts such an intense three day Expo which appeals to all male and female participants and age demographics."

Farina said his involvement

in the Expo was important for the continued development of soccer in Australia.

"Soccer continues to thrive and prosper at a grassroots level and the Expo provides an excellent forum for those participants to come together in a single event," said Farina.

The Expo also provides great exposure to the NSL clubs and to various other soc-

football elite

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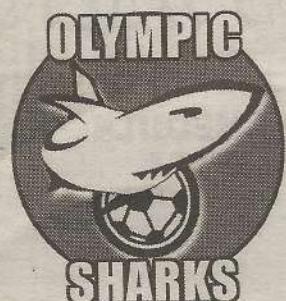
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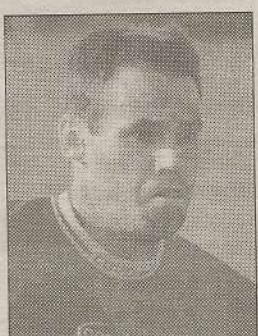


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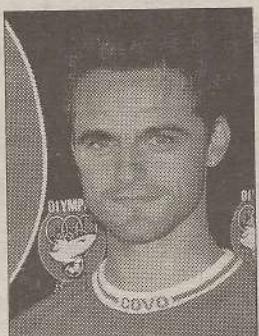
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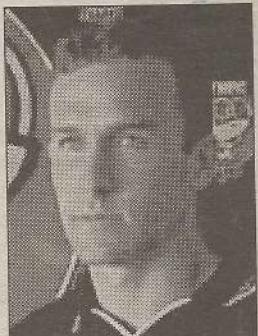
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Gary Phillips



Ante Milicic



Tommy Podeljak



Clint Bolton



Joel Porter



Toto Da Costa



Manager/Player:
Andrew Marth

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D DAY SYDNEY UNITED STYLE

By Stuart Jones



Sydney United was once again in turmoil last Friday night as near on 500 passionate supporters met to decide the fate of the club.

Marko Franovic announced as of the meeting he was no longer part of the board and then it was the current board who laid out the financial position of the club.

At present the club are \$375000 in debt and running behind \$15000 per week. The debt by June will be \$450000 as there are no more home matches but the players need to be paid each week. In fact to keep the club afloat it was announced that the club needed around \$700,000 by October.

There was talk of initial negotiations having been begun with Leagues clubs but no details were mentioned as confidentiality agreements had been entered into. It was also mentioned that there would be no money for the club the takeover would pay off the debts and then have the club to do with what it likes.

The board mentioned that all avenues were being investigated but a longer-term view was necessary for should Soccer Australia re-launch their competition they would sure to have new financial prerequisites. There was also a question on getting sponsors however a spokesman said with the lack of media exposure in Sydney for all soccer getting sponsors was extremely difficult.

In fact it was mentioned by members that Soccer Australia and most clubs were in financial strife, however the board said it would not trade insolvent and therefore make board members financially liable, and that should there not be a solution by Tuesday they would be forced to bring in an administrator.

The audience made it clear that the club was part of the community and wanted it to remain in the communities hands but there were some dissenting voices. Some were concerned about how there always seems negative publicity associated with the club and how embarrassing that was. They proposed a merge with a

League Club to shut the critics up and get a long-term vision going. However most spoke of their love for the club as it is now. A lot of people spoke of their faith in Coach Branko Culina, one saying, "If Branko builds the foundation we can build a house on it."

There was then a request made for those present to pledge funds. Unfortunately whilst the voices were strong the pledges were not and the announcement was made by Mr Franovic that not enough was pledged to keep the club going. He then apologized and said if something dramatic did not occur by Tuesday then the board would be calling in the administrator.

"It looks like next Tuesday is this proud club's D Day." He also said he had done all he could and then, along with most of his board, left the meeting. Marko Franovic had already been thanked for all he had done for the club and he had announced he was living for personal reasons. He also said he had not always treated the club like one of his businesses for this was a love for him.

He mentioned that mistakes had been made but everyone makes them and he had never shied away from that fact. His efforts in helping the club can never be underestimated and it was certainly sad to see him walk out so dramatically after only 33 people pledged financial support of the 500 present.

At this stage things looked grim for Sydney United however most thought that things would turn around, as one staff member said, "there will be a club here next season." Five minutes after the abrupt walk out a foundation player of Sydney United 43 years ago got and spoke passionately about the club. He spoke of how the club had been on its knees before but always got up. So it seems this time for by the end of the night there was over \$300000 pledged.

Perhaps the dramatic walk out had done the trick and shown supporters how realistic the threat was. Whatever the cause the pledges started rolling in. It looks like a new board may come in and maybe they will have the funds to survive. Unfortunately for the club this amount of money is not enough to make longer-term plans.

For Sydney United to survive all it may have to do is keep going year by year and watch others fall by the

wayside. There is no guarantee Parramatta will be around in another three years and if Marconi do fail to pick up in the next couple of years their future may be in doubt.

The best, and most radical, solution would be for Marconi and Sydney United to combine with a 50-50 split so soccer people run the club. It may be in the future that this will happen but not whilst year to year plans keep being adopted. It would take some strong leadership at both clubs though. If a League's club takes over you can kiss the club goodbye.

League people would come in and could well make all the mistakes Power have, where it has been said that it is the evidence that League people can't run a proper soccer club. The "new" Sydney United under a new League board would end up in the scrap yard of history like Collingwood and Carlton.

Having said that they may just need the funds to

survive Sydney United need enough funds to help Branko Culina set about building a model for the future. Without it he may not be there because you need an incentive to stay at a club. Culina's thoughts about leaving the club would surely have been eased when he heard the strong support from those so passionate about the club they turned out for the meeting. However without strong support from the board Culina knows those supporters will not take losing each week, even if he cries lack of funds.

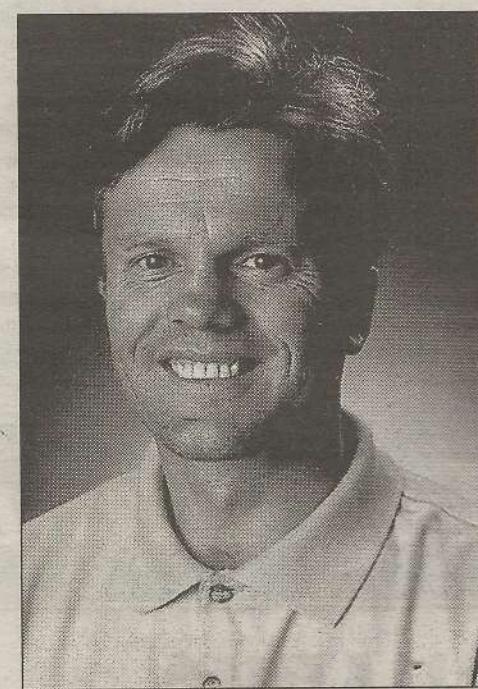
It would be nice to see all that passionate support back at Edensor Park each week. Some fans of other teams will disagree but I have always found Sydney United, along with Marconi and Spirit, a friendly, family oriented club. Their back office workers are a pleasure to work with and some of the nicest people I know. The players are committed to the club as are the coaching staff.

It would be a shame for them to go into administration as that would mean all players were free agents and coach Culina's job would be too hard, even for a man of his coaching talent.

It has taken this long to recover from the last time they went into administration. Hopefully for the club's sake the threat was just that, a threat, to garner more financial support. If not then there may be no more Sydney United, but check ABSW ten years ago, we were writing them of then. They seem to always bounce back.

The final point is there are a lot of other clubs in worse financial trouble than United, but United are trying to keep it honest. It would be interesting to see the debt situation of clubs like Melbourne Knights, Adelaide City, and Marconi. What would be more interesting would be to find out the real story on the debts at Soccer Australia. SA may want to lambaste "ethnic clubs" but in this case the chase for integrity is being led by Sydney United. It is just a shame that SA's postponement of the new league means that more short term plans are being made again, instead of fixing the underlying issues eating away at the core of the beautiful game in Australia.

As for Sydney United we will find out Tuesday as to whether enough has been raised to keep the club going.



Branko Culina: Sydney United Head-Coach.

2002 OFC NATIONS CUP IN FULL SWING

The 2002 OFC Nations Cup promises to be bigger and more competitive than any of the previous tournaments.

The line-up of teams has increased from six to the top eight ranked nations in the OFC, all vying for the chance to represent Oceania at the FIFA Confederations Cup in 2003.

Based on the last tournament, the team that wins the OFC Nations Cup stands to benefit in a big way. Just qualifying for the FIFA Confederation Cup guarantees an estimated \$US1 million with the amount increasing depending on

the team's final placing.

Australia had a dream run at the 2001 FIFA Confederations Cup in Japan, surprising many by beating World Champions France and former World Champions Brazil. The Socceroos were eventually placed third; an impressive result which went along way towards gaining more respect for the OFC.

But qualifying this time will be no walk in the park for the Socceroos. They will have to do it on the New Zealand All Whites backyard in Auckland. The All Whites won't need much motivation for the 2002 OFC Nations Cup.

All they need to do is look at last year's heart breaking World Cup Qualifying series, where they were comprehensively beaten in both home and away matches.

Under new coach, Mick Waite, the All Whites will also be seeking revenge for their 2-0 loss in the final of the 2000 OFC Nations Cup in Tahiti. The All Whites last beat the Socceroos in 1998 and won the right to represent the OFC at the 1999 FIFA Confederations Cup.

Both sides should not be guilty of complacency with so much at stake, and they would be wise not to underestimate the island nations

who will be just as determined to win.

In Tahiti two years ago, the Socceroos and All Whites were pushed hard in their respective semi-finals. The Socceroos escaped with a narrow 1-0 victory over Vanuatu, while the All Whites found it difficult to put away the Solomon Islands, eventually pulling away for a 2-0 win.

Tahiti and Fiji share similar strengths and will also push their claims. Fiji missed the 2000 OFC Nations Cup because of the political coup.

Papua New Guinea and New Caledonia complete the line-up of teams. Both teams qualified coming first and second respectively at the OFC Nations Cup Preliminary Competition in Samoa in March. That tournament contained the bottom six nations in the OFC competing for the last two spots in the OFC Nations Cup. Both PNG and New Caledonia were impressive at the Preliminary Competition and have the strike power and unpredictability to trouble the other six teams.

Australia heads a tough looking Group A with Fiji, Vanuatu and New Caledonia, while New Zealand will have their hands full dealing with Group B opponents Solomon Islands, Tahiti and Papua New Guinea.

MATCH SCHEDULE

GROUP A

- 1 Australia
- 2 Fiji
- 3 Vanuatu
- 4 New Caledonia

GROUP B

- 1 New Zealand
- 2 Solomon Islands
- 3 Tahiti
- 4 Papua New Guinea

Friday 5th July (North Harbour Stadium)

5.00pm
PNG vs Solomon Islands

7.30pm
New Zealand vs Tahiti

Tuesday 9th July (North Harbour Stadium)

5.00pm
Tahiti vs PNG

7.30pm
New Zealand vs Solomon Islands

Saturday 6th July (Ericsson Stadium)

5.00pm
New Caledonia vs Fiji

7.30pm
Australia vs Vanuatu

Wednesday 10th July (Ericsson Stadium)

5.00pm
Vanuatu vs New Caledonia

7.30pm
Australia vs Fiji

Sunday 7th July (North Harbour Stadium)

1.00pm
Solomon Islands vs Tahiti

3.30pm
New Zealand vs PNG

Friday 12th July (Ericsson Stadium)

5.30pm
Semi-Final 1

8.00pm
Semi-Final 2

Monday 8th July (Ericsson Stadium)

5.00pm
Fiji vs Vanuatu

7.30pm
Australia vs New Caledonia

Sunday 14th July (Ericsson Stadium)

To be advised Playoff 3rd/4th

To be advised Final



The last Confederation's Cup Australian Squad.

KINGZ END BOUTSIANIS SAGA



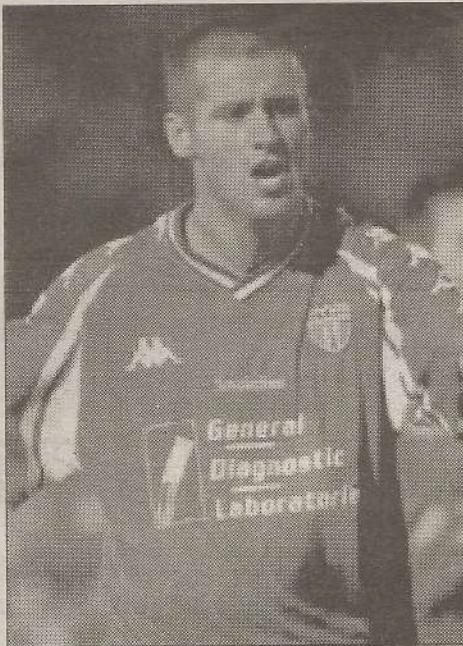
The Football Kingz have decided not to go to court over the Con Boutsianis transfer saga, which would have seen the playing of the NSL's Top-Six Finals Series interrupted.

The Kingz Board decided it wasn't in the best interests to delay the play-offs and further erode the credibility of the league.

Despite this, the Board's position on the matter has not changed and still believe they have been treated unfairly. They feel an Independent Disputes Tribunal should have dealt with the issue, as is the normal procedure in these matters.

The Club's unequivocal legal advice is that such action would have been successful, however the significant cost involved would have to come from next season's player budget and would not change the outcome of this season.

The Chairman Paul Smart said, "In the circum-



Con Boutsianis: The South Melbourne star has been in terrific form since his arrival from the Kingz.

stances, we sympathize with Parramatta Power who should be in the playoffs, however any further erosion of NSL credibility by delaying the playoffs is not in the best interests of the sport."

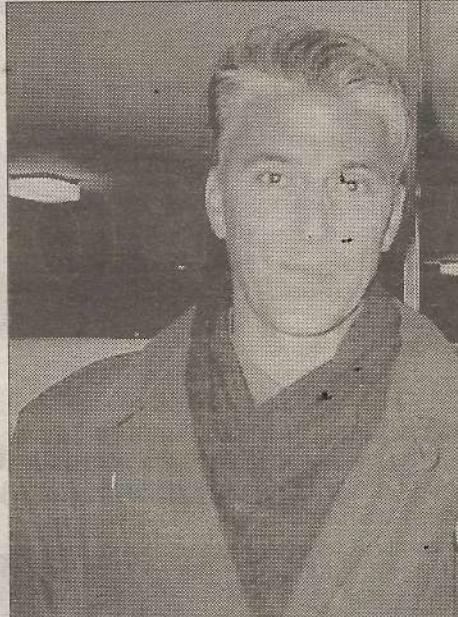
"There are still financial matters outstanding between Con Boutsianis and the club which the club is continuing to pursue vigorously," said Mr. Smart.

Boutsianis was in scintillating form in Souths last match against the Stallions where the Melbourne star hit two amazing goals to gift his side a place in the Semi-Finals.

His first goal came in the form of a cracking left foot drive outside the box while his second strike came direct from a corner kick.

It is no secret that since his arrival from the Kingz mid-way through the season, South Melbourne's form has progressed immensely. The lethal left footer's desire now is to carry on the winning trend right through the Semis.

South Melbourne's achievement in moving from bottom place at the start of the National League season, to finish fifth will no doubt feature in the history books as being one of the most prolific come-backs in Australian football.



Eddie Krncevic: Has been lucky to have attained the services of Boutsianis and is looking forward to a successful Semi-Final series.

OCEANIA CHIEF HITS OUT AT CHUNG

Oceania Football Confederation (OFC) president Basil Scarsella has hit back at comments made by FIFA vice-president Dr Chung Mong-Joon in an SBS interview that Oceania's champion should qualify for the World Cup through Asia rather than be given direct qualification.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter recently revealed that he believes Oceania, the only confederation currently without direct entry to the World Cup, should be given the same privilege every other confederation enjoys.

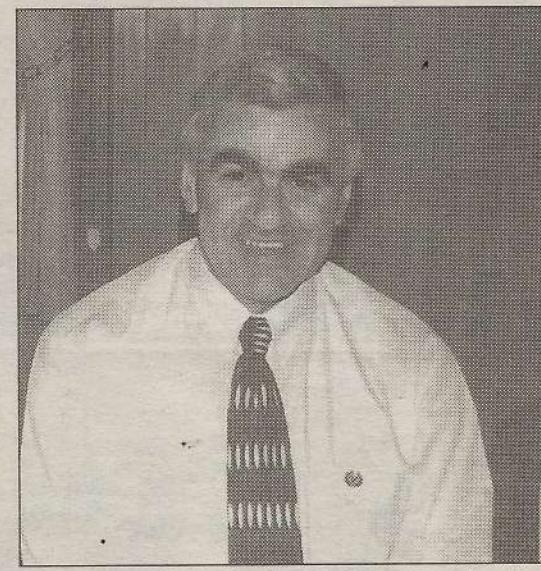
But Dr Chung said in the interview on Toyota World Sports that the Oceania champion should have to play off against an Asian

nation for a place, a view Scarsella says is simply him looking after his own confederation's interests.

"Chung Mong-Joon is

direct qualification for the Olympic Games, which is the first time we've done that," he said.

Standing between



Basil Scarsella: Hit back at Dr Chung's claims that Australia should qualify through Asia.

obviously working for the Asian Confederation and what he is suggesting is for the benefit of the Asian Confederation, not for the benefit of Oceania," Scarsella said.

"Realistically when you look at the 32 teams that are going to the World Cup for 2002 in Korea and Japan, they're not necessarily the best 32 teams in the world."

Scarsella added that the recent move to give Oceania's under-23 champions direct entry into the Olympic Games makes him confident that a similar move is on the horizon for the World Cup as well.

"I guess a positive indication that that realization is setting in is the fact that we've recently just gained

Oceania's hopes of direct entry though is the showdown Blatter faces in May for the presidency of the governing body, with Issa Hayatou challenging him for the role he has held for the last four years.

While Dr Chung threw his support behind Hayatou in the interview because he feels it is time for change at the top, Scarsella says Blatter has worked hard for emerging nations such as those in Oceania and should therefore be re-elected.

"We have benefited greatly under the reign of president Blatter, where he is focussed on football development in the emerging nations, and the Oceania countries certainly rank in that sphere," Scarsella said.

TOUCHING TRIBUTE TO CONSTABLE McENALLY

All too often, Soccer in this country receives publicity when the game is brought into disrepute.

How refreshing it is to see that the Olympic Sharks have found time to honour the late Glenn McEnally, the young constable who tragically lost his life in the line of duty.

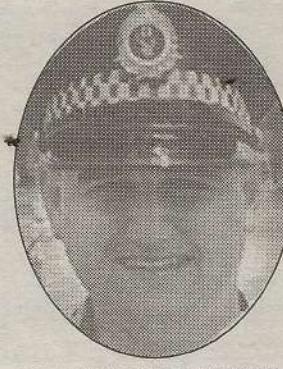
As a tribute, the Sharks have arranged a Charity Cup match between the NSW Police Representative XI and the NSW Fire Brigade XI.

The match will kick-off at 4pm on Sunday April 21, immediately prior to the NSL semi-final clash between the Olympic Sharks and Melbourne Knights at Toyota Park.

This is a great gesture by the Sydney club and gives centre stage to two organisations that have been hard-hit this year. They certainly

deserve the opportunity to celebrate their respective units and pay respect to a young man who loved his work.

Well done to the organisers of this event, a touch of class.



Constable Glenn McEnally will be honoured at the semi-final match between the Olympic Sharks and Melbourne Knights.



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National Soccer League

ELIMINATION FINAL 1ST LEG



Melbourne Knights



Olympic Sharks

SCORELESS DRAW GIVES THE SHARKS AN UPPER HAND IN THIS WEEK'S DECIDER

By Bert van Bedaf

In a first-leg elimination final strewn with errors and few chances at Knights stadium, the Melbourne Knights failed to score, allowing Olympic Sharks to return to Sydney with a useful 0-0 draw.



Andrew Marth: Knights captain challenging for a loose ball.

Nevertheless, both coaches expressed quiet satisfaction with the outcome. The Sharks could look forward to home contest with a clean sheet and the Knights had not conceded a goal and were a better proposition on the road, away from the critical glare of their supporters.



Joel Porter: Had a brilliant game against the Sharks last Sunday.



Live-wire striker Toto Da Costa in full flight at last Sunday's Elimination Final.

The advantage for the Knights is that 1-1 will be enough for them to go through on the away goal, while the Sharks must win. In all, the return leg is a tantalising prospect. Both sides still have everything to play for. A place in the next stage



Knights attacker Joel Porter will do all he can this week to score against Sharks custodian, Clint Bolton at Toyota Park for the decider.

of the finals is very much alive for both clubs.

The 5,000-odd spectators didn't get much to look at. There were no goals for a start and countless loss of possession, poor passing and few shots on goal.

The Knights hit the post in the second half and put on the pressure in the last 20 minutes, but overall the game suffered from nervous tension and slippery conditions after two days of rain in Melbourne.

Knights captain-coach Andrew Marth was not too disappointed with the scoreless game. He said he was confident there was a result to be had in Sydney.

"Our away record is a lot better than at home. We beat Olympic 1-0 away (in the regular rounds) and I'm not overly concerned. I'm quite confident we can get a result away," Marth said.

"I thought it was a well-fought game. All we need is a scored draw and we're through," Knights defender Steve Horvat said.

Olympic coach Gary Phillips said he wasn't unhappy with the draw either.

"I was happy with the effort. It was the first time in four weeks for us that we haven't conceded a goal and both teams went out to play an attacking game," Phillips said.

"I said all along that it would come down to the second leg and we had a bit of luck towards the end," he said.

Phillips played Australian U20s forward Greg Owens in a surprise start after a long lay-off and was pleased with the forward's performance.

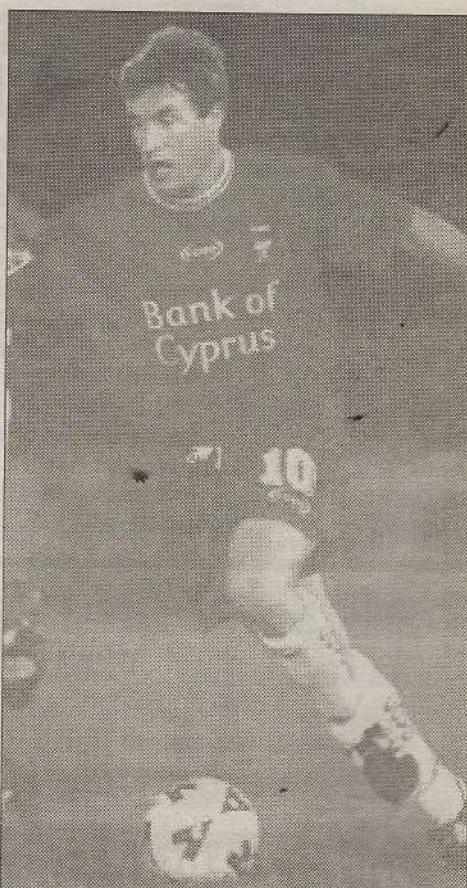
"It was Greg's first start for us all year. He's a good player and did well for us," Phillips said.

There were few chances in a tense opening half.

Porter lobbed a volley over the bar in the 26th

Packer latched on to a Troy Halpin through-pass minutes later but stranded on John. Halpin also went well over the bar two minutes before the break.

In a scrappy start to the second period, half chances went to both sides, but too many errors and frequent loss of possession made for poor



Troy Halpin in full stride for the Sharks.

performances.

Packer unleashed a 25-metre shot on 50 minutes and John just managed to push it for a corner, while at the other end the Knights jumped to their best opportunity when Porter put De Jesus through in the 67th minute.

The forward ran on to the ball and lashed a left-foot shot that had Clint Bolton beaten but crashed on to the base of the near post.

Porter also got as close to a goal as possible in the 81st minute when Sash Ognenovski fired off a long cross into the area.

Porter steadied for a full-on header from close range but aimed straight for Bolton who saved.

Two minutes later Porter was again at the end of a long pass but aimed just wide of the near post while strongly challenged by Tom Pondeljak.

Not even three minutes of time added on could produce a break-through, as the game fizzled out without a score.

National Soccer League

ELIMINATION FINAL 1ST LEG



South Melbourne Brisbane Strikers

COVENY DOUBLE SETS SOUTH TO ADVANCE

By Alan Clark

Two goals inside a minute from South Melbourne's New Zealand international striker Vaughan Coveny on a heavy Bob Jane pitch last Sunday afternoon was enough to give South a handy lead going into the second leg against Brisbane Strikers next week.

Coveny coolly netted a penalty shortly after the half-time break when South captain Paul Trimboli was tripped in the box by John McKain, giving referee



Paul Trimboli tussles with a Strikers defender in last Sunday's match.

Con Diomis the easiest of decisions.

And with Strikers' heads still reeling, Coveny put away his second after being fed a ball following a storming 40-metre run from mid-pitch by South young star Massimo Murdocca.

Strikers' goalkeeper Jason Kearton touched over what would surely have been contender for goal-of-the-season. In an audacious play, Coveny had found



Michael Petkovic: Made a terrific save in the dying stages of the match to give South Melbourne a clean sheet.

Con Boutsianis at the edge of the penalty area. Facing across goal, Boutsianis back-heeled to Trimboli who was now in the clear inside the area, no defender having factored in such a pass as possible. Trimboli's shot was just reached by Kearton to divert it on to the bar and over. What would have been a best goal contender, must now be one for best save.

"I think (two-nil) is enough," said South coach Eddie Krncevic, looking towards the return leg in Brisbane next week.

"Of course we can," said Strikers' coach John Kosmina when asked if his side could come back from this position. "It's a hard place to come and play - we still made chances. We just have to be more confident to keep the ball in the front third of the pitch."

The sides began the second half scoreless - and indeed, there had been few opportunities either side had crafted.

ABSW Player of the Year Fernando Rech and striking partner Kris Trajanovski had an early chance after Murdocca gave away the ball in midfield. Rech played the ball to Trajanovski who dwelt overly long given the high stakes of this game. South veteran Mehmet Durakovic saw the danger and broke up the move at the edge of his penalty area.

"(Trajanovski) did well, but he wasn't positive enough in front of goals," said Kosmina. "Finals football is a frame of mind."

Durakovic's defensive partner Patrick Kisnorbo had South's first chance of note when the ball reached him from a Boutsianis free kick. Perhaps Kisnorbo believed it would be cut out earlier in its path and his late reaction to what would have been a clean header meant the ball hit his shoulder and the chance was gone.

Three players were cautioned in around the half-hour as the tackles became overly fierce and the temperature rose, one subsequently involving Boutsianis and Kosmina in an animated conversation.

But the game never threatened to boil over, and after dealing with these three quick-fire incidents, Diomis rarely had to step in to lay down the conduct standard elsewhere in the game.

Within a few minutes of the re-start though, Diomis awarded a penalty to South after Trimboli was tripped by McKain in the box.

After waiting for a flare thrown onto the pitch by spectators to be safely dealt with, Coveny scored from the spot.

"The penalty changed the game," said Kosmina. "We were competing confidently, but still within ourselves."

"I don't know if (the penalty) was legitimate or not - John (McKain) was a bit clumsy and we probably let Trimmers have too much of the ball before that. I've seen Trimmers go over his feet a few times in his career, and it wouldn't surprise me if (the referee) got sucked-in."

Coveny's second was a fine illustration of South's passing game. South had successfully broken up a Strikers' attack straight from the kick-off after the penalty. Trimboli had gained possession and swiftly fed Ray Sekulovski - another of South's teenage brigade that have developed so well this season. Sekulovski in turn quickly found Murdocca whose pace on the ball was electrifying.

Murdocca's advance on goal was never going to be run-down, and with Con Boutsianis in support to his left, and Coveny to his right, there was ample pass

selection available. Murdocca elected to play a pass to his right for Coveny to run onto. The Kiwi front man took it in stride, then shot home firmly past Strikers' experienced goalkeeper Jason Kearton for

Krncevic, more a matter of fact than an attempt to downplay the quality of the save.



The Man of the Moment, Vaughan Coveny tussles with two Brisbane players.

the crucial second goal.

Just after the hour, a Trimboli slip allowed possession to be gained by the Strikers from where it was quickly fed to Rech with Trajanovski to his left, and South's defences stretched. Trajanovski's shot from the pass was too high.

With the clock almost counted down, Boutsianis had a golden opportunity to make it three when he was sent clear through the Strikers' defence from an incisive pass by substitute Nick Sabljak. Facing only Kearton and with little angle of difficulty, Boutsianis probably had too many options. His attempt at a chip was insufficiently lofted and gave Kearton an easy catch.

But the last chance fell to Brisbane deep into added time. Shane Stefanutto had made ground up the left towards the bye-line and crossed to the near-post. Trajanovski got a touch on the ball and it looked certain to beat South's goalkeeper Michael Petkovic. Petkovic made a remarkable reflex save at Trajanovski's feet, injuring himself in the process. It was perhaps a tie-saving intervention, such would have been the outcome were Brisbane to have gained that away goal.

"Petkovic has been doing that all year," said



Heads Up - Strikers' defender Stuart McLaren contests with Vaughan Coveny for the ball.

Chit Chat with Andrew Harper



Andrew Harper

A goal-scoring connoisseur of 101 goals in 321 games between seasons' 1986 and 2000/01, ranks Andrew Harper just outside the top-ten on the all-time leading goal scorer's list. His clubs during that period include Sydney City, Marconi Stallions, Brisbane Strikers and ultimately Newcastle United.

Now, a recognised element of the Soccer media in this country, the 34-year old is well-respected when it comes to examining about its long-term troubles, where they lie and how he feels they should be addressed. Harper talks to ABSW's Richard Kreider about the NSL and the Australian game in general.

RK: What is your summation of Soccer in this country?

AH: No different from anyone else's really. It's the game that frustrates a lot of people because everyone that is close to the game is committed to its growth and development and well-being, is frustrated by the stagnation.

And the answers to fixing it are really not that complicated. It's just a matter of will, a matter of sifting through the trouble, cleaning the slate and getting going with it. Football fires most people's bellies but it also delivers an equal measure of frustration.

RK: In terms of using Glory as a benchmark, we thought the Spirits and Powers of the NSL were going to be our saviours but they never really took off.

AH: If people only talk about copying Perth Glory, then it's only talk. I don't really see anyone having done it. Northern Spirit started in a blaze of glory but they weren't able to sustain it for financial reasons. Replicating Perth as I said before is just a matter of will but I don't really see a lot of will involved.

I see a lot of people with petty jealousies perhaps, and I just only imagine as well as many others, how big Soccer would be if there were another nine Perth Glory's around the country and there is no reason why it can't happen.

RK: Would a reduction in the num-

ber of teams improve the standard then?

AH: I think these are all moot points Richard. I think size and numbers in the competition are all figments of people's imaginations; they haven't been tested in any sort of scientifically researched sense.

As soon as someone can quantify to me exactly how many teams based on market size, share and research; then that's the obvious way forward for me in the short term when you determine how many teams you want in your premier competition.

And once you've got that, then I imagine you would spend five to ten years bedding that competition down until its rock solid before you would expand. The game is so troubled; where we are frustrated by its lack of development that people pull out single issues, which are really only symptoms and we try to tackle these single issues as though it's going to fix the game; i.e. getting rid of ethnic clubs, changing the size of the competition, moving from summer to winter etc. They are all single issues, but in isolation they do nothing but just compound the problems.

RK: Despite these problems, there is proof that we can still produce quality players by the amount playing overseas. What if the media play the game, in terms of giving Soccer a fair go; can we then see it lift to a justified status?

AH: Well again, I think we have just isolated another single issue argument with the media being the problem. Of course 'non-Soccer' media has played a key role in keeping the game down and continues to do so; but to suggest that the media should jump on board just for the sake of it — I don't think that fixes things either.

The game is so poorly run at the moment that not only do we give people ammunition to knock us, but we also give them no reason to give us any coverage at all. To blame the media for the state of the game is too simple. Perth Glory is an outstanding example of what can be done if people have the will. The truth is, the whole game in this



Harper in action with his final side, the Newcastle Breakers before his retirement.

country is relying on two things of credibility; the acceptance of some of our players in Europe and Glory.

I really don't see a lot of credibility outside of these two.

RK: So, where would the game be now if we didn't have SBS?

AH: It would be even more of a backwater! SBS over the years has done an amazing pioneering job in taking the game in a television sense, to Australians and broadening the market.

They boast very proudly of the audience figure they had for the World Cup; the saturation coverage during the last



Harper during his Marconi days.

three World Cups has really created a football market here which was blatant, and to a degree still is; that is now a very prominent sector of the market place. To the point where the big players in television like Channel Seven and Nine have seen value in getting involved. I don't think anyone can deny SBS has done a remarkable job in promoting, developing, coaching and marketing the game.

RK: Should we be concerned about the drop in quality in the NSL or accept the fact that it really is a farm for the overseas aspirants?

AH: I don't believe either need to be the case. The drop in standard people talk about is more of a perception thing. I honestly think it's to do largely with low morale surrounding the clubs. Players walk onto the field feeling they are not wanted by the clubs because they are an economic expense rather than an investment and a virtue for the club — so the grounds lack atmosphere.

The whole thing is on a self-defeating cycle; until players go to Perth and realise how good it can be. There's no reason for it not to be. Technically, it's up to people's perceptions but I would debate that it's been as bad as everyone says it is. It's not the glory days of the NSL; there's no doubt about that, but I think it's more of a psychological factor and low-morale that affects the playing standard.

RK: I believe you are involved in the publishing and promotion of John Warren's book *Sheila's Wogs and*

Poofers. What is your impression of his memoirs and how is the book selling?

AH: The book is going reasonably well and the publishers are very happy with it. The only difficult thing for Johnny was condensing all his stories into one publication.

I think he's got another three or four books in him; such is the depth of his knowledge where over the years he's had some fantastic experiences.

Making it all fit into one book was a real challenge; but it was fun and we just hope that it knocks down another barrier for Soccer where there isn't a huge market for Soccer books; but we hope this does well to make publishing houses aware that there is a Soccer market out there. It doesn't surprise me when he said he wouldn't want to change any of his past.

He might want to have improved the quality control on some issues but generally he wouldn't regret the life and times of Johnny Warren because from the outside looking in, he's had a much fulfilled experience.

RK: What is your impression of Johnny Warren as a person?

AH: He's a really committed soul; very committed to the good of the game. He's got a great eye for the big picture. It's pretty hard in broad terms to disagree with where he wants the game to go. I think he's got the common touch in that sense; where he speaks for a lot of people think about the broad aims and directions of the game it should go in.

RK: Should we have direct access to the World Cup Finals by virtue of the fact we are so isolated to the rest of the world — or should we go through an Asian zone?

AH: I certainly believe Oceania should use whatever political clout it has to maximise its position; and in maximising its position. It needs to look at not only direct entry but how it can strengthen football in the region; I don't think that's a question that's been adequately debated.

I think people have been talking just solely about direct entry to fix all our problems but again, that's hugely debatable about whether that will be achieved. What is unavoidable is Oceania should very carefully and concordently use all it's politically might to get the best deal that it can.

RK: Will FIFA reintroduce the Confederations Cup or do they feel there is such a fixture gridlock that prevents such a competition?

AH: If they are going to have to choose between the Confederations Cup and the World Club Championships which seems to be the case, I'd go for the World Club championship myself. But this is a political issue that FIFA are going to have to sort out.

RK: The Con Boutsianis affair has been allowed to drift on for too long. If the Kingz played a more influential part in the season, would this have been resolved sooner?

AH: It's a shocking situation. South

Melbourne believes what they believe and the Kingz are still unhappy; but we've not heard from Soccer Australia as to what is going on. You just wonder in disbelief how this is festering like it is.

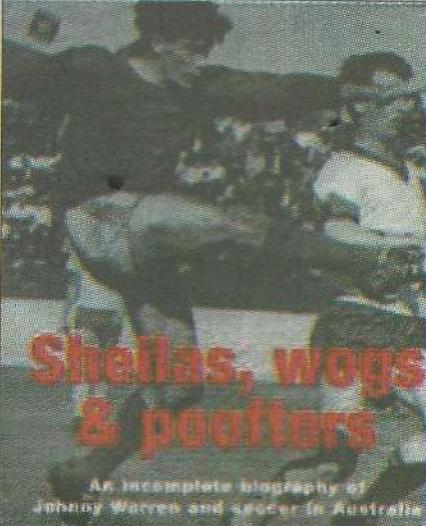
RK: If you were given the divine right, what would you change or add to our game?

AH: Gee, to answer that in one answer is difficult. The first thing I would like to see is football expertise embraced rather than shunned by the game. I'm not saying it should be run by ex-players but it must have been over thirty years that I've been alive where a host of ex-players with appropriate qualifications should have been plugged in around the place. I just don't believe that has happened.

And just for a scientific revolution in the game; the way it's marketed, organised, operated and the way it's staffed, the expectations, the way it deals with its own fraternity and institutions like the media in Corporate Australia. Really, that question is a pretty broad brush to paint with. Look, the answer quite seriously, is to reorganise the game completely. Not to try and fix what's there but to start again.

RK: What is your opinion of why Adelaide Soccer fans have vanished from Hindmarsh?

AH: The game has got no credibility. There is no association between club



Johnny Warren

With Andy Harmer & Jason Whittington

'Harps' helped Johnny Warren in his recent biography.

and fan. Decision making at pretty much every level is completely 'castrated' by political processes and I just think the whole thing needs to be restructured.

Humans are political beasts by nature but you've got to have a system which doesn't allow for the political natures of people to rule the roost. You can't have a situation where Victoria votes one way because New South Wales voted another because South Australia voted a third way.

And that's all because they are teaming up against Queensland! Look, the game will win in the end. It's just a matter of us in the game positioning it in an organisational sense to maximise the interest; and that hasn't happened to date.

EMERTON TO MISS UEFA CUP FINAL

Australia's representation in a major European Final look lost after Brett Emerton was ruled out of the UEFA Cup Final against Borussia Dortmund through suspension.

Emerton, playing in a central midfield role picked up a yellow card for time wasting that will force him into the stands to watch the final at Feyenoord's De Kuip Stadium on May 8.

It is a bitter pill to swallow for Emerton, who has been a mainstay of the Feyenoord side all season and will now miss its most important game of the season.

Emerton moved into a more central role for the second leg against Inter Milan, which Feyenoord drew 2-2 and won 3-2 on aggregate.

Feyenoord went into the game with a 1-0 lead from the first leg and once Pierre Van Hooijdonk

put the home side in front after 16 minutes, they were always in control of the tie.

Jon Dahl Tomasson then put Feyenoord 2-0 up on the night and 3-0 on aggregate before half time and it looked like a walkover was on the cards.

Inter decided not to start inform striker Christian Vieri, but with Ronaldo starting they still had plenty of firepower and in the second half, they started to pressure on the Feyenoord defence.

Two late goals by Christian Zanetti and Mohammed Kallon gave Inter some hope of recording a remarkable win, but in the end it was a little too late.

The omens for Feyenoord are good with their only previous success in the competition also recorded at their De Kuip Stadium in 1974, when they defeated Tottenham Hotspurs 2-0.

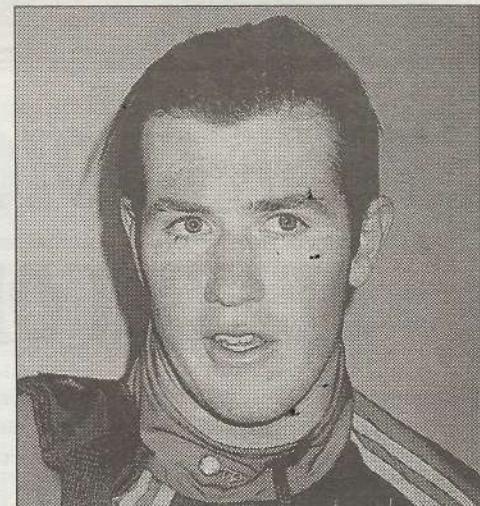
Dortmund progressed to the final, despite losing the second leg tie against AC Milan 3-1 at the San Siro.

A 4-0 first leg deficit made the task for AC Milan almost insurmountable, but two goals in the opening 20 minutes, set the tie up nicely.

However Milan was unable to crack the German defence again until the last minute when Serginho converted from the penalty spot and set up a tense last few minutes.

Any hopes of Milan stealing a fourth goal were then dashed when Lars Ricken scored for Dortmund to make the aggregate score 5-3.

If Emerton took the park for Feyenoord in the final, he would have been the third Australian to take part in a major European final after Craig Johnstone and Ned Zelic.



Brett Emerton: Will miss UEFA Final.

BROWNLIE TO BE WATCHED BY THE OWLS

Terry Yorath has admitted that he will be taking a much closer look at Australian Royce Brownlie in the summer with a view to a permanent move.

The Marconi Stallions striker, who was controversially released from his contract before the Round 26 clash with South Melbourne, causing an uproar at Stallions headquarters, played in the reserves against Aston Villa in midweek but had to be

replaced after sustaining a facial injury.

With the season's end in the NSL, Brownlie is now available on a free transfer and Yorath will run the rule over him in the summer in friendlies and during pre-season training.

The Owls boss said: "I will be taking another look at him when he gets fit again but he is still in my plans."

Although Wednesday still have not mathematically secured their First Division

EMPOLI TO SIGN FORMER JOEY?

By Mark Stavroulakis

Italian Serie B side Empoli have targeted Brisbane Strikers reserve grade and former U17 Joey keeper Nathan Coe.

The former AIS graduate enjoyed a great trial spell at the Italian club last year where officials from the club decided to keep a close eye on the 18-year-old.

The agile goalkeeper impressed the coaching staff at the Serie B club who realized that the youngster had enormous potential to progress to the next level.

Coe made headlines in last year's U17 World Cup in Trinidad & Tobago where he was named in the U17 World 11 squad alongside captain Carl Valeri who too will be moving to Italy soon to join Inter Milan for one season.

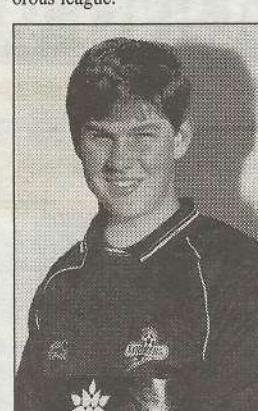
Coe was in outstanding form for the U17 Joey side, coach Ange Postecoglou held much praise for the Strikers star and put him down as a future Australian Socceroo prospect.

It is quite rare for a goalkeeper to be involved with various Institutes, Nathan has had the best of both worlds having graduated from the AIS in Canberra and also spending time under current Olympic Sharks coach Gary Phillips at the QAS.

It's been these programs that have developed young Coe into

an exciting Australian prospect for the near future as Australians are renowned for developing world-class goalkeepers.

The Italian club has two Australians on their books at the moment; Marco Bresciano and Vince Grella who are doing really well in the tough and vigorous league.



Nathan Coe: Could join two other Australian's at Empoli.

Bresciano is said to be on a rumored transfer to Parma, if Empoli fail to win promotion into the top flight next season.

Coe born and raised from the sunny Queensland suburb of Mt Gravatt has had dreams of one day playing overseas football.

Empoli could give the young star that chance with the National League coming to a close, Nathan could be called to move to the Italian side on a European summer transfer deal.

COVIC ADMITS HE SHOULD BE HAMMARBY'S NO 1.

By Daniel Kuziow

Australia's Hammarby goalkeeper Ante Covic has said he is better than the team's current no 1 Erland Hellstrom, who conceded three goals in the opening game of the season against Orgryte.

The former Marconi custodian was brought in to replace veteran Lars Eriksson, who quit at the end of last season, and played in most of the pre-season games yet was dropped for the season

opener and replaced by young Erland

former international goalkeeper Ronnie Hellstrom, was handed a starting place.

Admitting on fotbollsdirekt Covic said: "Erland played well against Orgryte, but I think I can do better."

"But I don't think I will play in the next game against Helsingborg because I can't see a reason to drop Hellstrom after one game now that they have decided to give him a chance."

He admitted that he was surprised when Hellstrom, son of



Ante Covic

He said: "I was disappointed as all goalkeepers are when they aren't allowed to play. I thought I've showed enough during the spring but now it's up to me to show coach Anders Linderoth that I should have been his first choice."

"The most important thing is still that Hammarby have two good goalies," he added.

ACT ACADEMY TO MIX IT WITH ENGLAND'S BEST

By Ben Moring

The ACT Academy of Sport's elite soccer squad has just embarked on a whirlwind tour of England.

The eighteen day visit started April 10 and sees this talented young squad play nine matches against quality opposition, which includes club academies from; Leeds United, Blackburn Rovers, Tranmere Rovers, Sheffield Wednesday, Everton, Chelsea, Charlton Athletic, Watford and Southampton in that order.

Tour organizer Chris Conti believes the tour will be extremely beneficial in the development of the boys; "We want to give the boys an idea about football culture in the U.K.", he said.

"We will be visiting some of England's big clubs to see how they are run and to interact with their coaching methods and ideals."

Those big clubs are the likes of Liverpool FC and Chelsea FC.

Furthermore, the touring party will be attending the Premier League fixtures of Everton Vs Leicester City, West Ham against Sunderland and the FA Cup semi-final fixture between West London neighbors Chelsea and Fulham.

And to top off a bumper tour, the boys will stop off at Anfield, St. Mary's, Stamford Bridge and Upton Park, grounds of Liverpool, Southampton, Chelsea and West Ham United respectively.

The ACTAS has had recent success in that they have five representatives in the AIS squad, including Carl Valeri who is now on his way to Italian giants Inter Milan.

The ACTAS program is an elite one, offering 1-3 year contracts to boys 15-18 years of age. "We look to train elite athletes, elite soccer players with the aim of producing international regulars,"

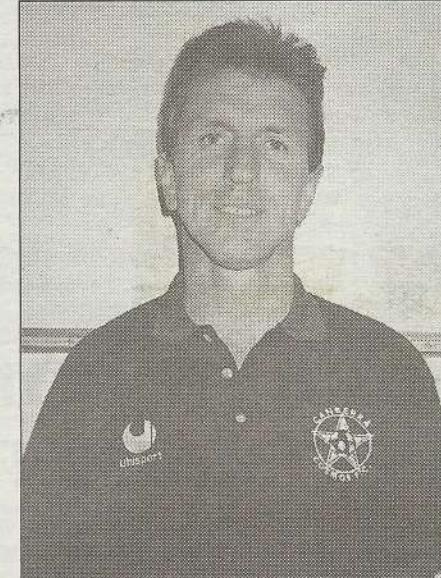
said Conti.

Conti continued; "This season (National Youth League) was successful on all fronts, we finished mid-table, but results are not the be-all and end-all to us."

"We have a very young team, with only a couple of over-age players. "Because we are not affiliated with an NSL team, we can't just call upon over-age first-teamers."

"We 'lost' a lot of players to the AIS, which is a very positive thing because we could bring in new youngsters."

Coach of the side is Mike Milovanovic, who has spent time at the AIS, was the last coach of the now defunct Canberra Cosmos and knows Australian players Mark Viduka and Hayden Foxe



Mike Milovanovic: ACTAS Head Coach.

amongst others who are plying their trade in the U.K. This will no doubt enhance the benefit of the tour for the youngsters who will be able to see how Aussies have handled the long move abroad.

Good luck to all parties involved as they represent elite Australian youth against some of England's best.

List of Players and Officials is as follows:

Aidan Brunsell
Andrew Barisic
Cale Padrota
Chris Morrow
David Reis
Hans de Koning
Ian Waldon
John O'Brien
Liam Doyle
Matt Anstey
Matt Grayson
Matt Menser
Matt Rees
Michael Spaleta
Nathan Denham
Nikolai Topor-Stanley
Paul Ivanic
Robert Cattanach
Steve Hayes
Mike Milovanovic
Chris Conti
Richard Beazley
Milan Ubojic
Graham Grayson
Dane Milovanovic

Letters to the Editor

WISE CHOICE FOR ABSW PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Dear Sir,

I would like to agree with your choice at awarding Fernando Rech the ABSW Player of the Year Award. Through the 26 rounds of the competition he has proven to be the most consistent and best of all the players and teams in the NSL.

Much of the Brisbane Strikers success this season has revolved around Rech and his understanding with Paul Foster undoubtedly helped John Kosmina's side in reaching such a high position on the table.

Yet it was not just his creative flair through midfield, Rech also managed a number of goals that at times were crucial at times throughout the season. He also helped in the defensive duties of his teammates, sitting just inside the penalty area to help clear any loose ball in the defensive 18-yard box. I think this year as much as any Rech was the complete NSL player.

His recent Australian citizenship is also worthy of praise. As a Brazilian by birth he is blessed with the natural footballing talents that many native Australian are not found to have.

He has grown up in a culture that embraces the most beautiful aspects of Soccer-working on sublime touches and skill to overcome an opponent. In Australia however the emphasis it appears is on the more physical aspect of the game.

These qualities of Rech will no doubt have an influence on the local game and also in the national team and in the near future I am sure that Frank Farina will recognise these traits and use him in his Socceroo squad.

Fernando Rech has only been playing in the NSL for a very short while and already he has received the praises of your magazine and many other well-respected publications. More importantly however he has received the plaudits of his fellow players and this shows that he is indeed the best player in the League.

Steve Watson,
Caboolture, QLD.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Fernando was ABSW's choice of player of the year through all our correspondence. Every journalist present gave a system of 3-2-1, Rech fared in most of the top points and therefore he won the award.

As mentioned in the article last week, many foreign players have had a low success rate in establishing themselves as quality players in the National League.

Rech has proven that he has what it takes to establish himself as one of the best players in the game.

Once again, congratulations go out to Fernando Rech.



Fernando Rech: Won this year's ABSW Player of the Year.

MARCONI AND THE BROWNIE AFFAIR A SCAM?



Dear Sir,

I must agree with the opinion expressed in the Royce Brownlie article on page 2 in this week's issue.

Most people who follow the NSL were well aware of Brownlie's scoring efforts of late. Many also were aware of Marconi's sudden rise up the table, reaching a point where they were challenging for a top 6 position.

While an improbable victory against South Melbourne would have furthered this claim for a finals position, thus opening the way for the striker to fly to England I still think it was wrong to release Royce Brownlie for trials at such a crucial time of the season.

Coming into the game against South Melbourne, Marconi was already without the services of John Maisano. Needing to score four goals to have a chance at securing a top 6 birth the obvious choice would therefore have to have been to start Brownlie in attack.

When news filtered through however that the Stallions had released him for trials with Sheffield Wednesday, I was somewhat shocked, knowing that now Marconi would be travelling to South Melbourne without one recognised striker. This could not have been good for the preparations of the players on the eve of such a big match.

While the Soccer committee gave good reasons for Brownlie to travel to England, saying they did not want to hinder the career of any of their players, I must question the timing of it and suggest that there must be other reasons for the sudden release of the player. Only in a dire situation would a club let a star player leave the club on the eve of a crucial match.

Could it be that Marconi was in such a dire situation that they were willing to resign their National League season with one game remaining and face the outcry and anger from fans and players alike?

Robert Toscatti,
Loftus, NSW.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The trend of players in respective National League clubs trialling overseas has picked up immensely this season — a trend that players themselves like, however hurting their supporters and coaches is the aftermath.

It is quite strange that Brownlie, a potent scorer for the Stallions was let loose with one vital match remaining in making the Semi-Finals.

Unfortunately the result said it itself, a three-one loss all but ended the Stallions chances of making the next phase.

Had Royce taken part, maybe a different scenario would have eventuated.



Royce Brownlie: His absence from the Stallions team in their final match was a huge loss for Marconi.

REFLECTION ON THE WOLLONGONG WOLVES



Dear Sir,

What ever happens at the end of this finals campaign one thing will hold true.

The NSL champions of 2001/2002 end the two-year reign of the former champions, signalled the end of an era. For the last two years, the Wollongong Wolves have been grand final champions. Unfortunately they could not make it a treble this season.

The Wolves season was by all accounts less than what was expected. After defending their 1999/2000 crown against South Melbourne last year, big things were expected of them. However as is so often the case better teams have come through to beat them and soon the Wollongong Wolves will become the former champions.

Many players will now leave the club forcing Ron Corry to build a team from scratch. New Parramatta Power boss Nick Theodorakopoulos, in a move that will leave the Wolves without many of their champions from the previous two years, is scouting many current Wolves play-

ers. While they will always be a part of Wolves history the inevitable departures of these players will close a chapter on what was the best era of south coast Soccer.

So with the finals commencing this weekend, I think it is only fair to stop for a minute and realise past champions, in particular the Wollongong Wolves who brought so much to the local Soccer community. While their future is by no means certain in regards to playing staff, rest assured that come the 2002/2003 the Wolves will bite back and be a force once again.

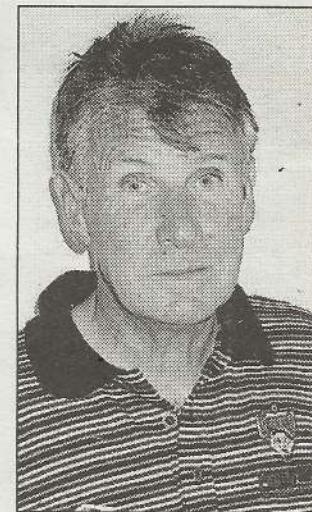
Paul Simpson,
Kiama, NSW.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Wolves this season were a far cry from the team they were 2-3 years ago.

Unfortunately for the club, many top quality players were lost to rival National League clubs or bigger overseas teams.

This season, coach Ron Corry had a hard task of leading the side to a possible three-peat — it didn't happen.

The one aspect Ron and the Wolves can take from this season



Ron Corry: Had a tough year and will rely on Youth next season.

JOHNNY WARREN FOR SOCCER AUSTRALIA!



Dear Sir,

I have just read John Warren's book about a lifetime of Soccer, with all the ups and downs of the game.

This man is a legend. He's got more football knowledge than the whole NSL put together.

But why is he not employed to help Soccer

Australia? Having him will boost the level of professionalism in this country.

H. Tholen,
Launceston, TAS.



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Premier League Wrap-Up By Glenn Davis

QUEENSLAND PREMIER LEAGUE WRAP-UP

Former Socceroo stalwart Col Bennett paid homage to the might of his former club Queensland Lions after watching his side Easts cave-in 4-1 at home on Saturday night.

Queensland Lions were down 1-nil at half time before it flexed its premier league championship muscle with a four goal rout in the second half.

"We played three up front to try to make them change their pattern of play and we played well in the first half and deserved the lead," Bennett said.

"But I knew we'd have to pick up a gear or two after the break because Lions would pick up three gears."

"It's a pity there's not three points available for each half as we would have

picked up three in the first half and they got three in the second half."

Bennett was associated for a long period of his star studded playing career with Brisbane Lions in the late 70's and early 80's including winning a Phillips Cup in the national league.

Bennett believed his side's effort to get the opening goal inside the first five minutes when Brad Watts stunned the visitors was a feat in itself with Lions conceding only one goal in its opening four rounds.

"We virtually played the State side and yet they still had four or five State players in their reserve side," Bennett said.

"There's not too many sides who will score against them let alone beat them and to score so early gave us some confidence."

"Lions rely a lot on their fitness but just when you think you're a chance against them they keep coming at you and eventually you lose concentration."

Lions coach Miron Bleiberg paid tribute to Easts defence but believed it eventually led to their undoing.

"Easts played well and defended well in the first half but at half time we changed tactics and things worked for us," Bleiberg said.

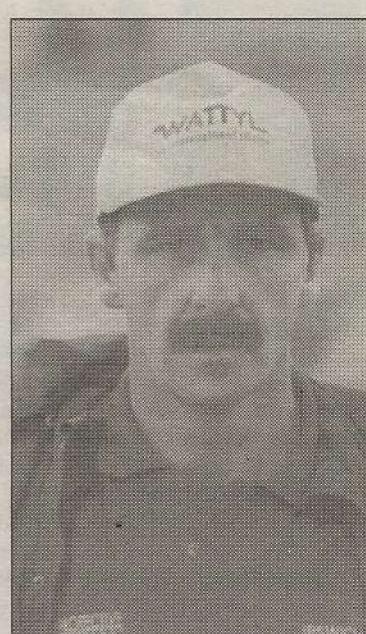
"I think after they scored so early they defended too early."

Bennett agreed saying he would have liked to score the opening goal in the last five minutes, which would have put Lions under extreme pressure.

"Scoring so early went against us. I would have loved to have scored in the last five minutes to lead," he said.

Lions got back on level terms five minutes into the second half when striker Matt Olley beat two defenders before tucking a shot past Easts keeper Rob Barraclough, who Bleiberg rated the man of the match.

Striker Greg Di Losa, back after a pro-



Frank Pimblett: Brisbane City mentor delighted about the team's win over the Gold Coast.

longed injury stint, put the visitors ahead soon after by heading home a perfectly timed cross from Nathan Carlos while Steve Dawe chipped Barraclough to extend Lions lead to 3-1.

Lions fourth goal also came from a header from Darren Sime who finished off a cross from substitute Warren Allen.

Lions reeled off their four goals in the space of 20 minutes but the last three came against ten men after Easts had Brendan Rodgers sent off for his second bookable offence when the scores were locked 1-all.

"We were already in control when Easts had Rodgers sent off and realistically the score could have been 10-1," Bleiberg said.

In the upset of the round Taringa

Rovers suffered a humiliating 4-0 defeat and incurred another long term injury in the process against newly promoted North Star.

Taringa had defender Matthew Packer stretchered off with a serious knee injury, which is expected to sideline him for the rest of the season.

"It was a big blow to lose Matthew and it looks like a cruciate ligament which will keep him out for the season," said coach John Ogden.

"It was a big blow to lose Sean Molenda for the season with a similar injury in the first game of the season and now we've lost another player."

After a scoreless first half, Bobby Hamilton's under-rated side grabbed the opening goal against the run of play, according to Ogden.

North Star's goals came from a pair of doubles from Alan Cameron and Barry Broadbent.

Brisbane City maintained second place on the ladder with a comfortable 3-1 home victory against the Gold Coast.

After a scoreless first half Queensland midfielder Damian Waugh broke the deadlock in the 55th minute rifling home from 18 metres off a Glen Kolpah cutback.

Waugh figured in Brisbane City's second goal just three minutes later when he sent a cross into the far post for John St. Martin to head home the first of a double.

St. Martin put the game out of reach of Gold Coast midway through the second half latching onto a cutback from Pablo Aviles.

Brisbane City coach Frank Pimblett was delighted with his team's performance, particularly after the break although disappointed to concede a sloppy goal off a corner by Gold Coast's Josh McLoughlan.

"I'm pleased the way we played and it was a lot better effort this week," Pimblett said.

"We weren't crash hot in the first half but our second half was terrific and the margin could have been a lot more."

"We're still only two points off Queensland Lions and it will be a big game when we play them in our next game

in a fortnight."

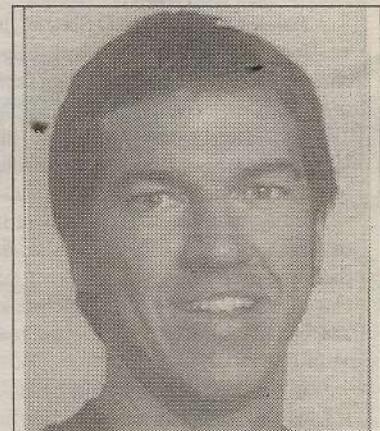
Brisbane City has seven players in the Queensland squad for next weekend's interstate clash against Victoria and New South Wales on Anzac Day but several could be in doubt.

"A few of them have got niggling injuries and I'm not sure whether they will make the trip to Melbourne," Pimblett said.

"Waugh's got a niggling back problem, Wayne Strange has a calf problem and Glen Kolpah got a slight knock on his knee."

Meanwhile cellar dwellers Mt Gravatt stayed at the foot of the table, surrendering a 2-nil lead half time lead in their 2-all draw with Toowoomba Raiders.

A double from Mt. Gravatt youngster Russell Woodruff gave The Hawkes a sniff of their first win of the season before Toowoomba's Brent Hyslop bagged a double after the break for a deserved point.



Damian Waugh: Brisbane City's star.

Newly promoted The Gap picked up its second point of the season with a valuable 2-all draw with Ipswich Knights with all four goals scored in the opening half.

Peter McKendrick and Richard Hilli netted for the Knights while Riki Fulton and Levi Beel scored for The Gap.

Wynnum remained third on the table with nine points after its game with Rochedale was postponed because of the state of the Perry Park pitch.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Round 5

FIRST DIVISION

Round 6

	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
Queensland Lions	5	5	0	0	13	2	15
Brisbane City	5	4	0	1	11	3	13
Wynnum	4	3	1	0	7	4	9
Gold Coast City	5	2	1	2	12	6	8
North Star	5	2	2	1	7	8	7
IPSW Knights	5	1	1	3	13	8	6
Eastern Suburbs	5	1	2	2	8	10	5
Taringa Rovers	5	1	3	1	5	8	4
Rochedale Rovers	4	0	1	3	5	7	3
T'wmba Raiders	5	0	2	3	6	9	3
The Gap	5	0	3	2	4	13	2
Mt Gravatt	5	0	3	2	3	16	2

ROUND 5 RESULTS

Brisbane City	3	Gold Coast City	1
Queensland Lions	4	Eastern Suburbs	1
IPSW Knights	2	The Gap	2
North Star	4	Taringa Rovers	0
T'wmba Raiders	2	Mt Gravatt	2

Wynnum v Rochedale Rovers (not played)

ROUND 6 RESULTS

Pine Rivers Utd	3	Albany Creek	0
Newmarket	3	Brisbane Olympic Uni	0
Bundaberg Waves	2	Mitchelton	1
Inala City	1	Capalaba	1
Redlands Utd	0	Uni of Qld	1
Rocklea Utd	0	Albany Creek	2
Capalaba	0	Slacks Creek	4
Uni of Qld	0	Brisbane Olympic Uni	5
Albany Creek	0	Grange Thistle	0
Slacks Creek	0	South Utd	2
Brisbane Olympic Uni	1	South Utd	2
Grange Thistle	1	Slacks Creek	1

WEEKEND FIRST GRADE FIXTURES

◆ ROUND 6 ◆

Friday 26th April

Taringa Rovers vs IPSW Knights
The Gap vs Eastern Suburbs

7.30pm
7.30pm

Saturday 27th April

Gold Coast City vs T'wmba Raiders
Mt Gravatt vs Rochedale Rovers
North Star vs Wynnum

5.00pm
6.00pm
7.00pm

Sunday 28th April

Queensland Lions vs Brisbane City

4.00pm



NEW SOUTH WALES PREMIER LEAGUE

www.nswpremierleague.com



FEATURE MATCH

Parramatta Eagles

V



Bonnyrigg WE

MAJOR SEMI-FINAL

Sides rank one and two square off this week, with a place in the Grand Final and a week off on offer for the winners.

Eagles coach Tam Finlayson was a very interested spectator last weekend at the Serbian Centre where he watched Bonnyrigg unleash a solid ten minute burst to unseat Blacktown City. With his side enjoying the weekend off, Finlayson looked relaxed as he sought to find a few chinks in the White Eagles armour for this week.

"We have a few ideas on how to handle them" said Eagles striker Jimmy Bakis. "Tam and our assistant coach John Callega have been working hard on our gameplan and I expect us to give this game one hell of a shake."

Parramatta had a number of players nursing some niggling injuries preferring a light weekend of training in an effort to freshen up before the big game. But Finlayson is expected to increase the tempo in the days leading up to this all-important showdown.

"It is going to be one hell of a game" concluded Bakis. "Bonnyrigg proved last weekend that they can be an awesome attacking side when they need to be and they will cer-



Parramatta striker Jimmy Bakis.

tainly keep us on our toes. But we have beaten them this year and we are confident we have the ability to do that again."

White Eagles coach Greg Woodhouse is no stranger to the rigours of semi-final football having taken his side to the Grand Final last season. After pulling off a masterstroke last week in introducing substitute Michael Hawrysiuk at just the right time, he knows only too well he is just ninety minutes away from another appearance in the season decider.

"We have been playing well and I am very pleased with the way the boys have been playing" said Woodhouse at the conclusion of the Blacktown City game.

"We are starting to peak at the right time and our morale is sky high and that augers well for a good showing this weekend."

Bonnyrigg still have midfielder Chris Bradley in doubt with a groin strain, while John Kyriazopoulos is expected to be available after recovering from a hamstring injury and while goalkeeper Ivan Necevski continues to impress, keeping former State goalkeeper Fernando Greco on the bench.

"We'll do well this week" said Woodhouse. "Parramatta won't be easy, no side ever is, but if we keep our composure and discipline we'll go close."



Bonnyrigg's Tayfun Devrimol.

Parramatta Eagles are proudly sponsored by
Parramatta Leagues Club and Bank of Valletta

Bonnyrigg White Eagles are proudly sponsored by
B & S Windows.

PREMIER LEAGUE



WEEK TWO: SEMI-FINALS

★ MAJOR SEMI-FINAL:

PARRAMATTA EAGLES V BONNYRIGG WE

SUNDAY 21ST APRIL

4PM

MELITA STADIUM (SOUTH GRANVILLE)

UNDER 19:

CENTRAL COAST COASTIES V LEICHARDT TIGERS

SUNDAY 21ST APRIL

2PM

GABBLE STADIUM (SEVEN HILLS)

★ MINOR SEMI-FINAL:

FIRST GRADE:

BLACKTOWN CITY V BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS

SUNDAY 21ST APRIL

4PM

GABBLE STADIUM (SEVEN HILLS)

UNDER 19:

PARRAMATTA EAGLES V FAIRFIELD BULLS

SUNDAY 21ST APRIL

2PM

MELITA STADIUM (SOUTH GRANVILLE)



The *Cafe La Scala* Player of the Week after Week One
Semi-Finals of the NSW Premier League is:

Cafe La Scala

Vuko Tomasevic
Bonnyrigg WE

Cafe La Scala is located at Shop 32, Piazza Level,
Italian Forum, 23 Norton St, Leichhardt. Phone: (02) 9372 8577



Inside ... Inside ...

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- From The Sidelines & Scoreboard P16
- Super League News & Reports P17-18
- Youth & Cadet Leagues P18-19
- NSW Amateur Soccer Federation News ... P20



NSW Premier League



PREVIEW

SEMI-FINALS: WEEK TWO



Blacktown City vs Belconnen Blue Devils

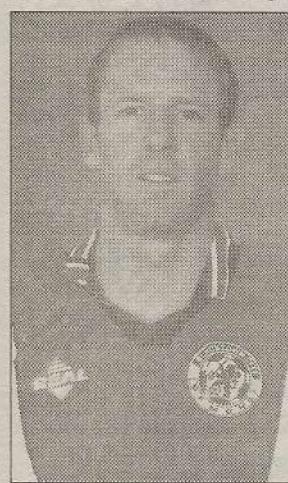


MINOR SEMI-FINAL

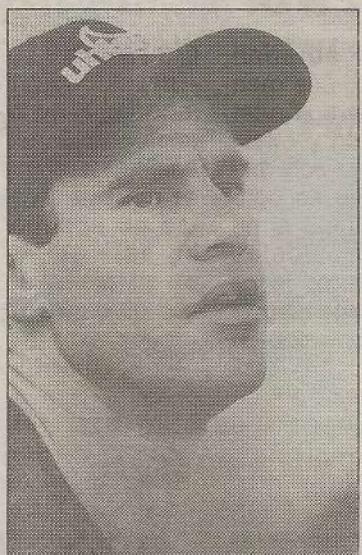
Gabba Stadium is the venue for this sudden death match up between the Demons and the Blue Devils.

Blacktown City were beaten 3-1 by Bonnyrigg last weekend to suffer their first defeat in the past fourteen starts.

Despite leading the match 1-0 and arguably looking the better of the two teams, the Demons were unable to stop a



Blacktown City's stalwart defender Damien Foxe.



Devils' coach Lino Fiorese will be quietly confident of steering his charges through to the next round.

ten minute burst from Bonnyrigg to leave them one game away from elimination.

"Bonnyrigg were a little hungrier than us last week" said coach Brian Brown, "and full credit to them. They took their chances and we lacked composure in front of goal which cost us dearly."

One big worry for Brown

and the Blacktown coaching staff was the injury to key defender Mike Smith.

The former Marconi and Eastern Suburbs left footer left the field in the hands of the trainer and has a badly strained left calf. His position is in doubt, though in Damon Langan the Demons have a ready-made replacement should Smith not come up to scratch.

"It's going to be a tough week for the boys" continued Brown. "Psychologically they must bring themselves back up from a loss and I'll be reminding the team we can't afford any slip-ups this week. Belconnen play a very defensive game."

They have some good wingers and like to attack on the break but we'll be ready and looking forward to the game."

For their part the Blue



Blacktown City's in-form custodian John Crawley.

Devils were shock winners over Leichhardt last week, where goalkeeper Tony Giannasca was absolutely outstanding.

Not only did he save a second half penalty from Sam La Rocca but he also tipped a James Stubbs-Mills strike over the bar in the first ten minutes to keep his side in the hunt.

"We are playing quite well at the moment" said Giannasca, "and the boys will take a lot of heart from coming up to Sydney in our first semi-final appearance and knocking over Leichhardt.

Blacktown will be very tough, but we have done it once and we give ourselves a big chance of doing it again."

While there are no major injury concerns in the Belconnen camp, Shane Lyons is still troubled by the gash sustained a few weeks ago but according to Giannasca is champing at the bit to play.

"Semi-finals" football is



Belconnen's keeper Anthony Giannasca will be aiming to outdo his opposite number.

what we as players strive to achieve and Shane is really feeling the pinch.

He is still training the house down and it will be touch and go to see if Lino includes him in the squad" said Giannasca."

Blacktown City Demons are proudly sponsored by Perfection Milk, West Ham United Football club, Cadbury-Schweppes, Wonderland Travel, Independent Gaming Systems.

Belconnen Blue Devils are proudly sponsored by Belconnen Soccer Club, Uhlsport, McGuigan Wines, bestvalueIT.com, Pacific Painting, Sharp Direct.

U/19 MAJOR SEMI-FINAL

CENTRAL COAST V LEICHHARDT TIGERS

While the Coasties enjoyed the day off last Sunday, the Tigers were going through the mill in a semi-final showdown with the Eagles.

They finally did prevail 2-1 in extra time after scores were locked at 1-1 after regulation time, but how much this will take out

of John Romeo's side, remains to be seen.

Both sides have lost just four games all season with the Central Coast getting the week off by virtue of a better for and against with this game a match up between two of the best under 19 sides seen in recent years.

U/19 MINOR SEMI-FINAL

PARRAMATTA EAGLES V FAIRFIELD BULLS

The Eagles were beaten in extra time last weekend and will have their backs against the wall this week.

For the loser there is no next week and the Bulls know that only too well having

come through a tough elimination final last weekend with Blacktown City.

The Bulls also have Craig Sharpley and Ish Arrarte eligible to play in this game and their contribution could shift the balance in favour of the Bulls.



NSW Premier League



Bonnyrigg WE 3 Blacktown City 1

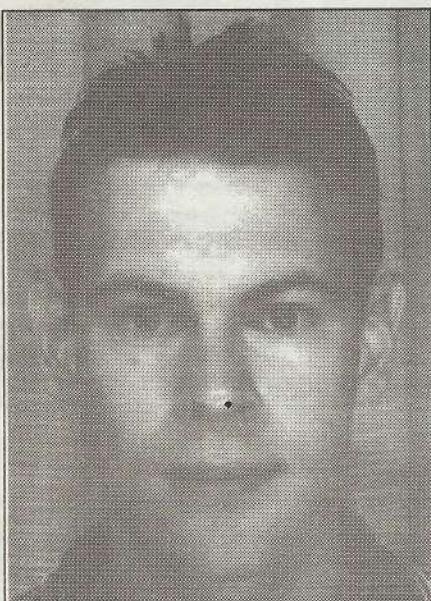
By Greg Stock

Bonnyrigg moved to within one game of a coveted Grand Final spot when they knocked over their arch rival Blacktown City in the Preliminary Semi-Final on Sunday afternoon.

With an explosive ten minute burst in the second half the White Eagles were near unstoppable as they clawed their way back from a 1-0 deficit with eighteen minutes remaining, to overpower the Demons with a wounding burst.

While the game never reached any lofty heights in the first stanza, the game certainly opened up in the second, with plenty of end to end action. Vuko Tomasevic was the chief architect as he and Shane Knight slipped up a gear after David Reid had given his side the lead in the 68th minute when he put away a Steven Riches cross with a deft header.

But the goal only seemed to harden the resolve of the home side as coach Greg Woodhouse introduced



Jimmy Aschner: Scored the third goal for Bonnyrigg.

substitute Michael Hawrysiuk and with his first touch he had his side back on level terms. Hawrysiuk met a Knight cross at the back post which left goalkeeper John Crawley at sixes and sevens allowing the midfielder to place the ball into an empty net.

Enter Vuko Tomasevic. From 30 yards out, Tomasevic unleashed one of the best individual strikes seen in Premier League football for many years, as he turned Kain Rastall and Jimmy Nikas inside out and then let rip with his right foot. John Crawley dived at full stretch to his left but he had no chance as the ball nestled neatly in the top left corner.

Jimmy Aschner put the game beyond reach when he sprang the offside trap, beating Damien Foxe and Dane Hokin in a leg race to go successfully one on one with an advancing Crawley.

But the game belonged to both Knight and Tomasevic. They were hard as nails when the going was tough in the first forty-five minutes and were equally creative in the second as the game was split wide open.

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 3 (Hawrysiuk 72', Tomasevic 76', Aschner 82')
Blacktown City 1 (Reid 68')
at The Serbian Centre, Bonnyrigg.

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES: Ivan Necevski, Sasa Utjesenovic, Tayfun Devrimol, Vuko Tomasevic, Devrim Huseyn, Michael West, Shane Knight, David Harding, Johnny Ghiso (Michael Hawrysiuk 71'), Jimmy Aschner, Robert Gomez; Coach: Greg Woodhouse.

BLACKTOWN CITY: John Crawley, Dane Hokin, Damien Foxe, Peter Sermanni (Paul Dee 64'), Ben Willard, Mike Smith (Steven Riches 60'), Kain Rastall, Naoki Imaya, Jimmy Nikas, Zlatko Donev, David Reid; Coach: Brian Brown.

Cautions: Bonnyrigg — Harding 34', Ghiso 45', Devrimol 71', Tomasevic 78' Blacktown City — Nikas 33', Smith 42', Foxe 75', Reid 78'.

Referee: Ben Williams
Assistant Referees: Gavin Martin and Ned Sparkes
Fourth Official: Chris Blain



Leichhardt Tigers 0 Belconnen BD 1

By Paul Goodwin

A thrilling game at Lambert Park saw Canberra visitors Belconnen emerge victorious, with a late free kick from substitute Oscar Zamora settling the issue, after a titanic tussle for the previous 89 minutes.

Belconnen captain Tony Giannasca led from the front with two crucial saves at either end of the game that set the scene for the grandstand finish.

In the 6th minute he dived full length across his goal to push away a superbly struck shot from James Stubbs-Mills that had goal written all over it.

There had been an initial scrummage and the ball fell nicely for Stubbs-Mills on the edge of the area and the home fans could not believe their misfortune when the former NSL keeper kept the ball out.

There were several fine chances for both sides in the opening period and Belconnen perhaps had a slight edge in that department, with Michael Katz, David Arranz and Marko Perinovic all just wide with their efforts.

Tigers' skipper Sam La Rocca had a bad day, picking up a nasty hand injury and also seeing his 12th minute pile driver flying just wide and then, towards the end, having his penalty attempt saved by the wily Giannasca.

The potency of Derek Poimer was well contained by the Blue Devils' defence and apart from one header straight at the keeper, little was seen of Leichhardt's former NSL star on the day. The second half began with Allan Picken's close range effort being saved by Giannasca, but after a midfield slog had produced few chances in the first half-hour, Leichhardt was awarded a penalty, for an apparently unintentional handball by veteran defender Toplica Popovich.

La Rocca stepped up confidently and with a sound record behind the skipper in a long season of spot kick duties, most would have expected him to score what could well have proved the winner.

Giannasca, however, guessed right and dived to his left to effect a solid save and the golden opportunity for the Tigers went begging.

Two chances fell in the last few minutes, one to Daniel Camara, whose effort was deflected for a Belconnen corner and Poimer's fast break upfield that saw Stephen Kemp outpaced by the Leichhardt man, who could then only drive his shot wide of the right post after doing all the hard work in the lead-up. It was a huge let off for Belconnen, whose response was to go on an attack of their own at the other end, the result of which was a free kick on the edge of the area that led to the winning goal. David Arranz broke away and was up-

ended by Steve Livingstone, who was cautioned for his trouble.

The free kick was driven low beyond the wall and into the bottom corner of the net and with only a minute left to play, was perfect timing by the patient visitors.

Daniel Camara almost scored a second, a minute later, from close range, missing the target by what could only have been inches.

Leichhardt had always been in the game, but its penalty miss proved costly.

The game also lost Michael Galluzzo to a second caution with 20 minutes to go and lost much of its impact from that point on. Forced to defend more, the game opened up increasingly for Belconnen and that may well have been the turning point of the game.

Belconnen's travelling band of followers was highly vocal and lent colourful support to their beloved Blue Devils. On balance, there was little between the two sides. The difference was perhaps the brilliance of Giannasca and the fighting spirit of his side that battled away for 90 minutes and was patient to the last. The Tigers faltered and their inability to score goals, a problem at Lambert Park all season, was again to prove their downfall.

LEICHARDT TIGERS: Andrew Crews, Joe Moric, Anthony Tesoro, John-Paul Boutros (Harry James 89), James Stubbs-Mills, Michael Galluzzo, Jeremy Brown, Ryan Jones (Steve Livingstone 78), Derek Poimer, Allan Picken (Steve Karavata 70), Sam La Rocca (C) Subs not used: RGK Murray Nelson, Ross Kethel Coach: Les De Celis

BELCONNEN BD: Tony Giannasca (C), Toplica Popovich, Elliot Zwangobani, Stewart Camara, Stephen Kemp, David Milin (Oscar Zamora 81), Adrian Dowling, David Arranz, Michael Katz, Marko Perinovic, Daniel Macor (Daniel Camara 82), Subs not used: RGK Michael McKenna, Clinton Larfield, Jaime Mauro Coach: Lino Fiorese Goals: Belconnen: Oscar Zamora 89

Cautions: Joe Moric 34 (LT), Michael Galluzzo 38, 72 (LT), Steve Livingstone 78

Sent Off: Michael Galluzzo 72 (LT)

Referee: Craig Pearce
Assistants: Michael Johnson and Ken Sharp
Fourth Official: Jim Barnes

UNDER 19 PRELIMINARY SEMI-FINAL



Leichhardt Tigers 2 Parramatta Eagles 1

By Paul Goodwin

Skilled striker Andrew Falas propelled Leichhardt Tigers into the Major semi final next weekend with two finely struck goals in the Under 19 game at Lambert Park, the winner coming in extra time soon after the start of the second period, to send Parramatta reeling.

Parramatta thought they had led from a Josh Sama goal in the 6th minute, after a nod on by Brett Townley-Jones, but referee Jim Barnes had noticed some pushing.

A superb through ball from Rocky Restuccia allowed Falas to go on and beat Liam Curran in the 56th minute and give the Tigers the lead, but a late strike from defender Joel Morgan took Parramatta into extra time.

Morgan was able to place a looping header past Murray Nelson after Sama had got his own head to

a free kick swung over by Michael De Bono in the 81st.

Falas grabbed the winner after surging away down the right and striking a low shot from a tight angle across keeper Curran and in off the far post.

LEICHARDT TIGERS: Murray Nelson, Liam Cameron, Ross Kethel, Daniel Cunningham, Tom Corte (C), Kelvin Foster, Daniel Coluccio, Andrew Falas, Michael O'Reilly (Nathan Foti 85), Rocky Restuccia, Tom Quilty Subs not used: Pascal Juliard, Paul Nicolau, Luke Tyburski, Josh De Kelly, Coach John Romeo

PARRAMATTA EAGLES: Liam Curran, Joel Morgan, David Comito, Jason McMinimee, Gregg Jackson (C), Simon Zahra, Michael De Bono, Iain Hall, Gosue Sama, David Lagudi, Brett Townley-Jones Sub not used: Ben Panecasio Coach: Bill Henshaw

UNDER 19 ELIMINATION FINAL



Blacktown City 1 Fairfield Bulls 2

By Greg Stock

Sunday was a sad afternoon for Blacktown City fans with their under 19s side losing 2-1 to Fairfield Bulls in the Elimination Semi-Final.

Fighting back from 1-0 down to level the scores from the penalty spot, the more mobile Demons outfit looked the more enterprising of the two sides throughout the game. But the Bulls, well marshalled by veteran defender Craig Sharpley had other ideas.

With Ismael Arrarte and Daniel Borg a constant thorn in the side of the Demons defence the Bulls were a threat every time they went forward and grabbed what would prove to be the winner in the 34th minute.

Arrarte unleashed a brilliant right foot effort after the Bulls broke forward on the break. The second half was more one sided with the Demons

pushing forward in search of the equaliser, but full credit to Fairfield who held firm in the final frantic ten minutes with Daniel Kuziow and Ryan O'Shea amongst their best.

BLACKTOWN CITY: James Wilkinson, Anthony Pisano (Ali Ndiaye 67'), Luciano Berbis, Graeme O'Donnell (Kane Carruther 59'), Chad Lewis, Stephen Bishara (Brian Vanega 84'), Patrick Gatt, Roger Galayini, Damon Langan, Phillip Hartshorn (Adam Tannpus 73'), Jehan Loke. Coach: Cliff Pointer

FAIRFIELD BULLS: Ali Akbal, Daniel Tosolini (Phil Badolato 57'), Ryan O'Shea, Diego Gourges (Lenny Yalda 84'), Adam Samuel, Craig Sharpley, Ismael Arrarte, Danny Borg, Anthony Cosamonto, Darrell Fernandez, Daniel Kuziow. Coach: Gilbert Yalda



NSW Premier League



FROM THE SIDELINES

with Greg Stock and Paul Goodwin

All soccer fans are urged to support a new football radio show on Sydney Radio Station 2KY on a Sunday evening. Running from 8-9pm and hosted by SBS commentator Paul Williams, the show will feature all the news and views on the world game both from here and abroad. Aussies Abroad, the NSL, English Premier League and our very own Premier League Final Series will all be featured with the hour long programme one not to be missed!

♦♦♦♦

Blacktown City Demons coach Brian Brown, is set to pass a significant milestone in the next few weeks. Should his side go all the



Brian Brown: Coach of the Demons.

way and make another Grand Final appearance the former State coach will rack up game number 100 in charge.

Midfielder and one of the Berries best young talents Greg Collins has signed a loan deal with Super League club Ryde City and he is top of the list for players the club is looking to retain for next season.

♦♦♦♦

While their side may not be appearing in this season's semi-finals Sharks fans have plenty of football action down at Seymour Shaw Park through the winter to keep them amused.

The fourth division club Southern Stars are calling the ground home, and all Sharks fans are urged to come along and support the new team on the block. Coached by former Petersham coach Martin Abi-Arrage, the usual bar and canteen facilities will be available making a Sunday afternoon at Seymour Shaw well worth the effort.

♦♦♦♦

Canterbury-Marrickville are hard at work starting their preparations for season 2002/3 in earnest. With a number of key players com-

ing off contract and a new coach in the offing there could be a few changes down Henson Park way.

Not a bad achievement for someone who is definitely one of the most successful coaches in recent seasons, as well as being a genuinely nice bloke and all-round football fan!

♦♦♦♦

Speaking of good young talents St George mid-fielder John Fotiadis is another player joining the ranks of the Super League, returning to his old club Ryde for a run during the winter season. Despite suffering a foot injury midway through the year, Fotiadis showed Saints fans enough to suggest he is one to watch out for in the future.

While his long flowing locks make him an easy player to recognise, his pace and ability to read a game are his best assets and he is one for the little black book.

♦♦♦♦

The Bulls and the Lions are two clubs who are yet to decide their direction for season 2002/3.

While both were unlucky to miss out on the final

series, both coaches, Craig Sharpley and Ljube Jancev, did have their side in the top five for varying periods over the season and are strong candidates for reappointment.

While this year was Sharpley's first season in charge of a senior team, Jancev has had many years of experience under his belt including a couple of Super League titles with the Lions in the mid 1990s.

♦♦♦♦

LEICHHARDT TIGERS are gearing up for a busy Finals' series with both teams in action, but much is also happening off the field at Lambert Park.

Work is soon to commence on the damaged grandstand that was ravaged by fire two Christmases ago.

The office section is to be refurbished and the seating area is to be restructured to include a standing bar area which will take out the three rows of seats that overlook the ground on the left hand side of the building.

This work will continue throughout the winter months, when Youth League games are held at

the venue.

Significantly, rumours have surfaced at the Italian-supported club that moves are afoot to turn back the clock and re-establish the famous old club as Apia-Leichhardt, in time for next season.

In its halcyon days the old club attracted sponsorship from the Italian community in the vicinity of \$280,000 but that figure has slumped to only \$70,000 in recent seasons.

Many in the area are pushing hard for the APIA name to be returned and hope that it will bring the club its old support and



Tony Raciti: The hard working Leichhardt Tigers' supremo.

sponsorship levels.

♦♦♦♦

PENRITH PANTHERS may not have set the Premier League world alight on the pitch this season, but the spirit at the club has never been higher.

Everyone involved with the operation at Andrew Road Field has been as pleased as punch with the entertainment value of the games this season and the attitude and team spirit among the players.

Goalkeeper Chad Taylor is spending the winter with Super League Macarthur Rams and a couple of other players have been invited down to Lynwood Park to trial for places after a couple of weeks' break.

The Penrith club has always enjoyed a strong relationship with the Macarthur people.

The club is also proud that apart from the opportunity for Taylor, who is still eligible for Under 19s, two of their younger players have been selected for the NSW State team by Greg Woodhouse, namely Jason Sciberras and Dave Gardiner.

Like Taylor, both were still Under 19 players this season, but cemented per-

manent first grade spots.

All the players will reassemble in early August for pre-season training but meanwhile they will be off to the club's Presentation Night at Kingswood Sports Club on 18th May, while they also have booked 6 tables at a combined Youth League and seniors Trivia night this coming Saturday (20th). Morale at the club has never been better!

♦♦♦♦

CENTRAL COAST coach Dale Eggleton is considering his coaching future at Pluim Park after a disappointing season.

He is delighted that the Under 19s have had such a strong season and won the Premiership, but at first grade level he feels that the players may respond to a new coach.

He also feels that some off the field issues need to be addressed to bring about a greater level of professionalism at the club.

Money to launch a serious assault on the Premiership has not been there and has limited the coach's options in building a strong and competitive side.

♦♦♦♦

SCOREBOARD

FINALS WEEK 1

PREMIER LEAGUE FIRST GRADE

PRELIMINARY SEMI-FINAL

BONNYRIGG WE 3 (M Hawrysiuk 65, V Tomasevic 70, J Aschner 82) BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS 1 (D Reid 63)

ELIMINATION SEMI-FINAL

LEICHHARDT TIGERS 0 BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS 1 (O Zamora 90)

UNDER 19

PRELIMINARY SEMI-FINAL

LEICHHARDT TIGERS 2 PARRAMATTA EAGLES 1

ELIMINATION SEMI-FINAL

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS 1 FAIRFIELD BULLS 2

**NEW SOUTH WALES
PREMIER LEAGUE**

PRODUCTION: Daniel Kuziow, Elly Vea, Mary Quartly, Mark Stavroulakis
WRITERS: Greg Stock, Paul Goodwin, Claire Killeen, Lezette Isaac, Ray Sandell, Nick Guoth, Robbie Bartolillo, Gary Vandeburg, Jo Boyd
PHOTOGRAPHY: Carlos Furtado
★ All information is courtesy of the NSW Soccer Federation
NSWSF Valentine Sports Park 235-257 Meurants Lane, GLENWOOD, NSW. 2768
Phone: (02) 9629 1800

FINAL STANDINGS

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Parramatta Eagles	22	17	1	4	61	23	52
Bonnyrigg WE	22	15	2	5	59	21	47
Blacktown City Demons	22	13	5	4	51	26	44
Leichhardt Tigers	22	12	5	5	40	29	41
Belconnen Blue Devils	22	12	4	6	44	31	40
Fairfield Bulls	22	12	4	6	50	43	40
Bankstown City Lions	22	10	5	7	51	48	35
Central Coast Coasties	22	4	6	12	21	41	18
Canterbury Marrickville	22	5	3	14	25	49	18
St George Saints	22	4	5	13	27	52	17
Penrith Panthers	22	1	8	13	24	45	11
Sutherland Sharks	22	1	4	17	21	66	6*

(*1 point deducted)

UNDER 19

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Central Coast Coasties	22	15	3	4	59	18	48
Leichhardt Tigers	22	15	3	4	50	18	48
Parramatta Eagles	22	13	5	4	44	28	44
Blacktown City Demons	22	14	1	7	60	29	43
Fairfield Bulls	22	10	4	8	45	38	34
Belconnen Blue Devils	22	9	4	9	48	49	31
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	22	8	4	10	40	43	28
Penrith Panthers	22	8	4	10	35	39	28
Canterbury Marrickville	22	6	5	11	23	36	23
St George Saints	22	6	4	12	28	47	22
Bankstown City Lions	22	3	2	17	15	71	11
Sutherland Sharks	22	4	3	15	38	69	8*

(*7 points deducted)



NSW Super League

PREVIEW SUPER LEAGUE: ROUND SIX

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY v MACARTHUR RAMS

University coach Stewart Porter was an interested spectator at Lynwood Park last weekend and has more than a trick or two to counter the hard running Rams style this week.

With former Breakers star Freddy Umlil back in the blue and yellow, the game is all set up for a fiery midfield clash between Umlil and Rams star Martin Bourke. Macarthur will be without the services of Greg King for about 10 weeks after the lightweight striker broke his collarbone two weekends ago and his contribution will be sorely missed. "The Rams are a hardworking well drilled side," said Porter, "but our morale is good and I expect my side to acquit ourselves well."

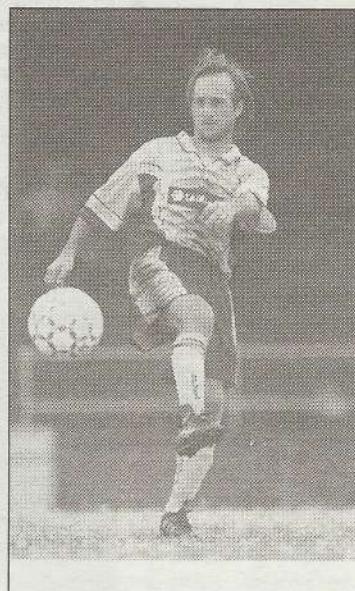
AC UNITED v STANMORE HAWKS

AC United coach Paul Carter and Hawks boss Chris Karasis might be great mates off the park, but on Sunday afternoon there will be none of that as the Hawks travel west to meet AC at Abruzzi Field.

With both sides on ten competition points there is not a struck match between

the two and the result could well come down to whatever side takes their chances. AC United is currently in negotiations with a Premier League striker and he could make his much anticipated season debut this week.

Robert Todorovski will return to the



The enigmatic Tom Pontidas of Stanmore Hawks.

Hawks' lineup from a week's suspension and his return will definitely boost Stanmore's chances.

DULWICH HILL v HAJDUK WANDERERS

Dulwich Hill has a new coach in Manuel Rodrigues but his debut to the coaching ranks was an unsuccessful one last weekend.

With just one win from five starts it's hard to see them troubling Hajduk who put in their worst performance of the season so far when beaten 4-2 by Ryde City last weekend.

Dulwich Hill has a couple of lively strikers in Xavier Schnyder and Orhan Dincer so Mark Abi-Arrage, Darren Camilleri and co will have their work cut out this week.

"It's a brand new team," said coach Manuel Rodrigues, "and we have struggled early which hasn't helped. But we have some very talented players in this side and we will be more than competitive."

RYDE CITY v MANLY-WARRINGAH

Watch out for Manly striker Hamilton Thorpe. That's the news emanating from the Dolphins and Gunners coach Tony Dunn had better heed the advice or pay the price.

Ryde have added a number of new faces in recent weeks including the likes of Greg Collins, John Fotiadis and Modar Sultan to strengthen the midfield and with a win last week, they are more than capable of winning this contest.

The Dolphins also have a couple of Northern Spirit youth players expected to debut in this game so this match is sure to be an entertaining one.

ROCKDALE CITY SUNS

v FRASER PARK JETS

The mouth waters at the thought of this one, two of the league heavyweights going head to head.

John Sents is one of the shrewdest tacticians in the game and he knows his Jets side has the ability to knock over any side in the league.

Tigers striker Derek Poimer is expect-



Rockdale City's speedy Peter Apolevski.

Director of Coaching Bill Pilovski.

"We have high expectations this season and a very talented bunch of players, and we will be working hard to take all three points this week."

HURSTVILLE CITY CS v MSC LIVERPOOL

It doesn't get any easier for MSC Liverpool as they host the high flying Hurstville side in a must win contest.

After a slow start to the season there were many encouraging signs in the performance of MSC last week, and they'll need more of that if they are to knock over Hurstville.

For their part Crescent Star play an exciting brand of football where they like to push forward at every opportunity. So fans shouldn't be surprised to see a goal scoring frenzy this week.



Manly's new coach, the irrepressible Robbie Slater.

Scoreboard

SUPER LEAGUE RD 5

SUPER LEAGUE FIRST GRADE

MACARTHUR RAMS	1	DULWICH HILL	0
(E Williams 34m)			
MSC LIVERPOOL	1	AC UNITED	3
(R Issa 71m)		(A Araujo 18m Z Younan 33m L Vincent 75m)	
HAJDUK WANDERERS	2	RYDE CITY	4
(S Jordan 68m T Worrall 80m)		(B Burrows 5m R Portelli 78/83m Own Goal 35m)	
FRASER PARK JETS	1	SYDNEY UNIVERSITY	1
(P Candelori 39m)		(R Smithies 86m)	
STANMORE HAWKS	1	ROCKDALE CITY SUNS	2
(N Varess 57m)		(P Apolevski 52m J Mendes 79m)	
MANLY WARRINGAH	3	HURSTVILLE CITY CS	2
(H Thorp 33/88m S Berry 57m)		(H Bayhan 8m H Sevgin 44m)	

SUPER LEAGUE TABLE RD 5

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Rockdale City Suns	5	4	1	0	14	6	8	13
Stanmore Hawks	5	3	1	1	7	3	4	10
AC United	5	3	1	1	14	11	3	10
Manly Warringah Dolphins	5	3	1	1	9	6	3	10
Hajduk Wanderers	4	2	1	1	10	7	3	7
Hurstville City Crescent Star	4	2	0	2	10	11	-1	6
Fraser Park Jets	5	1	3	1	6	7	-1	6
Macarthur Rams	5	2	0	3	4	9	-5	6
Ryde City	5	1	2	2	5	6	-1	5
Sydney University	5	1	1	3	8	9	-1	4
Dulwich Hill	5	1	0	4	7	7	0	3
MSC Liverpool	5	0	1	4	2	14	-12	1

SUPER LEAGUE FIXTURES ROUND 6

	1st Gd	Gd 21	Gd 19
Sun 21-Apr	Sydney Uni Oval No 1	3:00pm	1:00pm
Sun 21-Apr	Abruzzi Oval	3:00pm	1:00pm
Sun 21-Apr	Arlington Oval	3:00pm	1:00pm
Sun 21-Apr	Magdal Road	3:00pm	1:00pm
Sun 21-Apr	Rockdale Ilinden Field	3:00pm	1:00pm
Sun 21-Apr	St George Stadium	3:00pm	1:00pm
			11:00am

Sydney University	v	Macarthur Rams
AC United	v	Stanmore Hawks
Dulwich Hill	v	Hajduk Wanderers
Ryde City	v	Manly Warringah Dolphins
Rockdale City Suns	v	Fraser Park Jets
Hurstville City CS	v	MSC Liverpool



NSW Super League



• FEATURE MATCH •



Macarthur Rams

V



Dulwich Hill

Macarthur Rams striker Eric Williams might now be in the veteran class, but he again proved he is one of the best marksmen in the league, single handedly leading his side to a tough 1-0 win.

While his 32nd minute strike was not one of his best, it was effective, and lifted his side to their second win of the Super League season.

A constant thorn in the side of Dulwich Hill, the former Rockdale striker looked back to his best after a nasty car accident curtailed his goalscoring stream to a mere trickle last season.

But looking trim, taut and terrific, he led his marker Dejan Ristovski a merry dance for most of the evening giving the small Lynwood Park crowd plenty to cheer about. His goal was not a classic but then again, neither was the match. Put through by partner Ray Mandic on a fast break, Williams was equal to the task as he beat the advancing goalkeeper Tom Briskoski from a forty-five degree angle.

While the game never reached any lofty heights, the Rams were clearly the better side and should have had the game gift wrapped by half-time, bombing a number of good chances. Skipper Martin Bourke had the ball on a string as he teased and taunted his opponents throughout the ninety minutes, urging on his young team mates.

Dulwich Hill for their part never really looked likely to snare the points and with a new coach in Manuel Rodrigues in charge, looked listless for long periods of

the match. When the coach introduced Cameroon born midfielder Robert Masso just after the hour mark, the tempo lifted but not enough to cause any more than a few breathless moments for the Rams defence as the visitors tried to chase the game.

But it was again Eric Williams night. Picking up his third goal in four starts, he must now firm as one of the favourites for the Super League Golden Boot award at the end of the season.

Macarthur Rams 1 (Williams 32')
Dulwich Hill 0 at Lynwood Park, St. Helens Park.

MACARTHUR RAMS: Sasha Bozic, Wes Horne, Stephen Andrews, David Maude, Ben Green, Martin Bourke, John Kelso, Kory Babington (Leigh Murtz 71'), Eric Williams, Ray Mandic (Stuart Southall 80'), Gary Seymour, Coach: Hugh McCrory.
DULWICH HILL: Tom Briskoski, Andre Glucina, Dejan Ristovski, Ben Pilsworth, Bill Petrovski, Alain Barataud (Robert Masso 66'), Helder Cardoso (Chris Bello 62'), Dejan Radojkovic, Sam Nicola, Orhan Dincer (Sam Zinato 78'), Xavier Schynder, Coach: Manuel Rodrigues.
Cautions: Nicola (DH) 44' Ristovski (DH) 56' Horne (MR) 58'

REFEREE: Greg Leverton
ASSISTANT REFEREES: David Murray and Vishwa Rama

• ROUND 5 WRAP-UP •

MSC LIVERPOOL 1
(R.Issa 34')

AC UNITED 3
(A.Araujo 18' Z.Younan 33' L.Vincent 75')
at Hammondville Oval.

MSC Liverpool slumped to their fourth defeat in five outings when beaten 3-1 by cross-town rivals AC United. With veteran striker Alex Araujo again on song, the visitors survived a strong second half revival to record the win.

Former Bankstown City midfielder Robert Issa was amongst the best for Liverpool who fought back from 2-0 down to give themselves a chance at 2-1. They also lost a player late in the match with a bad head gash, but some poor finishing cost the home side dearly and they remain anchored to the bottom of the competition table.

HAJDUK WANDERERS 2
(S.Jordan 88' T.Worrall 80')

RYDE CITY 4
(B.Burrows 5' R.Portelli 78' 83' Own Goal 34')
at Hajduk Stadium.

A boil over at Hajduk Stadium with the favoured home side never looking likely to grab the points. Ryde City picked up their first win for the year with an emphatic 4-2 away win which should surely lift the Gunners in their return season in the Super League.

With midfielder Will Mailer blanketing Hajduks chief playmaker Gabriel Gonzalez, the Wanderers never looked likely as their opponents broke out to a 2-0 half-time lead. A sterling second half fight back saw the home side get back to 3-2 but a late strike from veteran midfielder Rob Portelli was enough to take the points for the visitors.

FRASER PARK 1
(P.Candelori 39')

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY 1
(R.Smithies 86')
at Fraser Park.

The Jets finished the game with just ten men after midfielder George Zabetakis was given an early shower in

their fiery clash with Sydney University. While the game was more akin to an arm wrestle for most of the match, a combination of poor finishing and a physical midfield battle made sure the game never reached any lofty heights.

Fraser Park also lost their new signing striker Ali Jomaa with a dislocated shoulder while Rob Smithies again found a late equaliser for the 'students' giving them an equal share of the points.

STANMORE HAWKS 1
(N.Varees 57')

ROCKDALE CITY SUNS 2
(P.Apolevski 52' J.Mendes 79')
at Arlington Oval.

Picturesque Arlington Oval provided the backdrop for a matchup between two of the leagues' unbeaten sides in a battle royale. In front of a huge crowd, the Suns made most of the running in the second half to finish the stronger securing themselves the three points.

Defender-come-midfielder Jose Mendes scored the game winner 11 minutes from the end when he slipped his marker and put away a shot in some tight traffic.

Stanmore to their credit never gave in and had a late chance to snatch a draw in the dying minutes but weren't up to the task. The win leaves Rockdale as the only unbeaten side in the competition.

MANLY-WARRINGAH 3
(H.Thorpe 33' 88' S.Berry 57')

HURSTVILLE CITY CS 2
(H.Bayhan 8' H.Sevgin 44') at Cromer Park

Former Parramatta Power striker Hamilton Thorpe proved the difference between these two sides, scoring himself a double and setting up the other Dolphins' goal.

The tall striker was on fire as his side fought back twice from 1-0 and 2-1 down to finish the game with a late flurry. His aerial presence was nigh unbeatable and as the opponents tried to hold on at 2-2 he took the game by the scruff of the neck, nailing the winner with just two minutes left on the clock.

The win takes Manly back into the top five on 10 points from 5 starts.



NSW Youth & Cadet Leagues



THIS WEEK'S FIXTURES

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE

	U13	U14	U15	U17		
Sat 20 April	Kingswood Park	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Penrith Panthers v Leichhardt Tigers
	Bates Drive	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Olympic Sharks v Southern Branch
	Gabriel Stadium	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:30 pm	4:15 pm	Blacktown City v W'ong Wolves
	Christie Park	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:30 pm	4:15 pm	Northern Spirit v Sutherland Shire
	Plum Park	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:30 pm	4:15 pm	Central Coast v Manly Warringah
	Melita Stadium	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:30 pm	4:15 pm	Pattie Eagles v Sydney United
	St George Stadium	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:30 pm	4:15 pm	St George v Marconi Stallions

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE

	U13	U14	U15	U17		
Sat 20 April	Cook Park	9:00 am	10:15 am	11:30 am	1:15 pm	Nepean Assoc v Macarthur Rams
	Jensen Park	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Bankstown City v Mingara Lakers
	Hensley Athletic Fd	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Eastern Suburbs v AC United
	Nineveh Field	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Fairfield Bulls v Bonnyrigg WE
	Parklands Oval	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Ku-Ring-Gai Assoc v Hills United
	Marrickville Oval	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Cbury M'ville v Blacktown Assoc
	Hajduk Stadium	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Hajduk Wanderers v Newcastle Utd

DIV 1 YOUTH LEAGUE

	U13	U14	U15	U17		
Sat 20 April	Garside Park	9:00 am	10:15 am	11:30 am	1:15 pm	Granville Assoc v Mt Druitt Town
	CSI Club	9:00 am	10:15 am	11:30 am	1:15 pm	Schofields' Spions v Illawarra Lions
	Arlington Oval	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Dulwich Hill v Ryde City
	Benson's Lane	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Hawkesbury City v Mt Pritchard
	Hurstville Oval	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Hurstville City v Stanmore Hawks
	Ron Dine Reserve	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	Camden Tigers v Rockdale City
	Hammondville Park	10:00 am	11:30 am	1:00 pm	2:45 pm	MSC Liverpool v Parramatta City

PREMIER CADET LEAGUE

	U11	U12		
Sat 20 April	Gabbie Stadium	9:00 am	10:15 am	Blacktown City Demons v Wollongong Wolves
	Christie Park	9:00 am	10:15 am	Northern Spirit v Sutherland Shire
	Plum Park	9:00 am	10:15 am	Central Coast Coasties v Manly Warringah
	Melita Stadium	9:00 am	10:15 am	Parramatta Eagles v Sydney United
	St George Stadium	9:00 am	10:15 am	St George v Marconi Stallions
	Bates Drive	10:00 am	11:00 am	Olympic Sharks v Southern Branch

	U11	U12		
Sun 21 April	Kingswood Park	10:00 am	11:00 am	Penrith Panthers v Leichhardt Tigers

SUPER CADET LEAGUE

	U11	U12		
Sat 20 April	Abruzzi Oval	9:00 am	10:00 am	AC United v Eastern Suburbs
	Oakville Reserve	10:00 am	11:00 am	Hills United v Bankstown City
	Marrickville Oval	10:00 am	11:00 am	Canterbury Marrickville v Hajduk Wanderers
	Mingara Club	10:00 am	11:00 am	Mingara Lakers v Macarthur Rams
	Serbian Centre	10:00 am	11:00 am	Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Fairfield Bulls

DIVISION 1 CADET LEAGUE

	U11	U12	

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NSW Youth & Cadet Leagues

PREMIER YOUTH AND CADET LEAGUE ROUND 7

Southern Branch v Blacktown City

Blacktown City had a long but fairly prosperous day at South Nowra as they gathered all the points in the Cadet League matches and then shared the Youth League points with Southern Branch. The Demons won both the 11s and the 12s 3-0 and then their 13s carried on the good work with a 7-1 victory. Southern Branch bounced back in the next two games winning both the 14s and the 15s 2-0 before the visitors claimed the points from the 17s match with a 3-1 win.

Northern Spirit v Wollongong Wolves

The Wolves would undoubtedly be delighted with their day against Spirit. The Clubs shared the points in the Cadet League clashes with the Wolves winning the 11s 1-0 and Spirit winning the 12s 3-0.

Spirit went on to claim the 13s by the odd goal in five and then had to settle for a single point from the 14s as the teams fought out a 3-3 draw. Wolves then took control, securing a 2-0 win in the 15s and a 1-0 win in the 17s.

Parramatta Eagles v Marconi Stallions

It was a gloomy day for the Eagles at Melita as they could not seem to take a trick against the Stallions. Marconi claimed the full ration of points in the Cadet League matches, winning the 11s 2-1 and the 12s 1-0. Things looked slightly better for Parramatta in the 13s as they claimed a point from the 1-1 draw but that joy was short-lived. Marconi grabbed a 2-1 win in the 14s, a 3-2 win in the 15s and finished the day with a 2-0 victory in the 17s.

RESULTS AND TABLES

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE: ROUND 7: GRADE

13: Sydney United 0 Penrith Panthers 1, Southern Branch YL 1 Blacktown City Demons 7, Olympic Sharks 1 Leichhardt Tigers 1, Northern Spirit 3 Wollongong Wolves 2, Sutherland Shire Sharks 1 Central Coast Coasters 1, Parramatta Eagles 1 Marconi Stallions 1, St George 2 Manly Warringah Dolphins 1. GRADE 14: Sydney United 2 Penrith Panthers 0, Southern Branch YL 2 Blacktown City Demons 0, Olympic Sharks 6 Leichhardt Tigers 1, Northern Spirit 3 Wollongong Wolves 3, Sutherland Shire Sharks 1 Central Coast Coasters 1, Parramatta Eagles 1 Marconi Stallions 2, St George 0 Manly Warringah Dolphins 2. GRADE 15: Sydney United 4 Penrith Panthers 0, Southern Branch YL 2 Blacktown City Demons 0, Olympic Sharks 9 Leichhardt Tigers 1, Northern Spirit 0 Wollongong Wolves 2, Sutherland Shire Sharks 1 Central Coast Coasters 0, Parramatta Eagles 2 Marconi Stallions 3, St George 1 Manly Warringah Dolphins 1. GRADE 17: Sydney United 3 Penrith Panthers 1, Southern Branch YL 2 Blacktown City Demons 4, Olympic Sharks 2 Leichhardt Tigers 1, Stanmore Hawks 1 Mt Pritchard 0, MSC Liverpool 1 Rockdale City Suns 0, Schofield Scorpions 4 Parramatta City 1.

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 13

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD Pts
Northern Spirit	7	5	2	0	8	10	17
Parramatta Eagles	7	5	2	0	14	5	9
Leichhardt Tigers	7	4	2	1	14	11	3
Sutherland Shire Sharks	7	3	2	2	10	9	1
Blacktown City Demons	6	3	1	2	12	5	7
Camden Tigers	7	3	1	3	14	5	-1
Hurstville City Star	7	3	1	3	14	5	-1
Penrith Panthers	7	2	3	2	6	7	-1
Olympic Sharks	7	2	3	2	5	6	-1
Central Coast Coasters	6	2	2	2	11	9	-2
Marconi Stallions	6	2	2	2	7	6	-1
Wollongong Wolves	5	1	1	3	7	8	-1
Sydney United	7	1	1	5	10	7	-4
Southern Branch YL	7	1	1	5	8	22	-14
Manly Warringah	6	0	1	5	4	12	-8

GRADE 14

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD Pts
Northern Spirit	7	5	2	0	28	9	19
Marconi Stallions	6	4	2	0	12	7	5
Central Coast Coasters	6	4	1	1	14	8	6
Olympic Sharks	7	3	3	1	17	8	9
Blacktown City Demons	6	3	2	1	12	7	5
Camden Tigers	7	3	2	2	10	9	1
Hurstville City Star	7	3	1	3	14	5	-1
Penrith Panthers	7	3	1	3	14	5	-1
Olympic Sharks	7	3	1	3	14	5	-1
Central Coast Coasters	6	2	2	2	11	9	-2
Marconi Stallions	6	2	2	2	7	6	-1
Wollongong Wolves	5	1	1	3	7	8	-1
Sydney United	7	1	1	5	10	7	-4
Southern Branch YL	7	1	1	5	8	22	-14
Manly Warringah	6	0	1	5	4	12	-8

GRADE 15

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD Pts
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------

Olympic Sharks 7 6 1 0 31 4 27 19

Marconi Stallions 6 5 1 0 14 6 8 16

Sutherland Shire Sharks 7 4 2 1 7 5 2 14

Parramatta Eagles 7 4 1 2 17 11 6 13

Wollongong Wolves 5 4 0 1 15 3 12 12

Sydney United 7 3 2 2 12 7 5 11

Northern Spirit 7 3 1 3 15 8 7 10

Blacktown City Demons 6 3 1 2 13 8 7 10

Camden Tigers 7 3 1 2 13 8 7 10

Hurstville City Star 7 3 1 3 14 8 6 15

Penrith Panthers 7 3 1 3 14 8 6 15

Olympic Sharks 7 3 1 3 14 8 6 15

Central Coast Coasters 6 2 1 2 11 9 8 13

Marconi Stallions 6 2 1 2 11 9 8 13

Wollongong Wolves 5 1 1 3 7 8 -1 4

Sydney United 7 1 1 5 10 7 -4

Southern Branch YL 7 1 1 5 8 22 -14

Manly Warringah 6 0 1 5 4 12 -8 1

GRADE 16

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD Pts
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------

Olympic Sharks 7 6 1 0 31 4 27 19

Marconi Stallions 6 5 1 0 14 6 8 16

Sutherland Shire Sharks 7 4 2 1 7 5 2 14

Parramatta Eagles 7 4 1 2 17 11 6 13

Wollongong Wolves 5 4 0 1 15 3 12 12

Sydney United 7 3 2 2 12 7 5 11

Northern Spirit 7 3 1 3 15 8 7 10

Blacktown City Demons 6 3 1 2 13 8 7 10

Camden Tigers 7 3 1 2 13 8 7 10

Hurstville City Star 7 3 1 3 14 8 6 15

Penrith Panthers 7 3 1 3 14 8 6 15

Olympic Sharks 7 3 1 3 14 8 6 15

Central Coast Coasters 6 2 1 2 11 9 8 13

Marconi Stallions 6 2 1 2 11 9 8 13

Wollongong Wolves 5 4 0 1 9 1 8 12

Leichhardt Tigers 7 3 0 4 17 11 6 9

Parramatta Eagles 7 3 0 4 6 9 -3 9

Sydney United 7 2 1 4 10 12 -2 7

Central Coast Coasters 6 2 1 3 4 12 -8 7

Manly Warringah 6 2 0 4 8 12 -4 6

St George 7 1 1 5 7 18 -11 4

Southern Branch YL 7 1 1 5 11 25 -14 4

Marconi Stallions 6 1 0 5 6 13 -7 3

GRADE 17

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD Pts
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------

Northern Spirit 7 5 1 1 16 5 11 16

Olympic Sharks 7 5 0 2 18 8 10 15

Blacktown City Demons 6 5 0 1 14 8 6 15

Sutherland Shire Sharks 7 5 0 2 13 11 2 15

Penrith Panthers 7 4 1 2 13 7 6 13

Wollongong Wolves 5 4 0 1 9 1 8 12

Leichhardt Tigers 7 3 0 4 17 11 6 9

Parramatta Eagles 7 3 0 4 6 9 -3 9

Sydney United 7 2 1 4 10 12 -2 7

Central Coast Coasters 6 2 1 3 4 12 -8 7

Manly Warringah 6 2 0 4 8 12 -4 6

St George 7 1 1 5 7 18 -11 4

Southern Branch YL 7 1 1 5 11 25 -14 4

Marconi Stallions 6 1 0 5 6 13 -7 3

COMBINED

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD Pts
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------

Northern Spirit 28 18 6 4 77 30 47 60

Olympic Sharks 28 16 7 5 71 26 45 55

Sutherland Shire Sharks 28 15 6 7 38 30 8 51

Blacktown City Demons 24 14 4 6 51 26 25 46

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE ROUND 7

Nepean Association v Hajduk Wanderers (Round 4)

Nepean started well as Peter Daglis' 13s enjoyed a 3-1 win but the Wanderers responded with the same score line in the 14s to even things up. The 15s did not shed any light on the division of points as they recorded a 1-1 draw but the issue was resolved in the 17s as Hajduk posted a narrow win in a five goal thriller.

Macarthur Rams v Eastern Suburbs

The clubs earned an even share of the points from this clash in a see-sawing day at Lynwood Park. Easts drew first blood with a 3-1 win in the 13s but the Rams got square when Bill Garrick's 14s resumed their winning ways with a 1-0 final score line. The visitors bounced back to post a 1-0 victory in the 15s but Glenn Lockhart's 17s produced a form reversal with an amazing 5-0 win to level things out.

Blacktown Association v Bankstown City Cubs

The visitors secured the Lion's share of the points at Francis Park with three wins from the four matches. The Cubs were successful by a single goal in the 13s but then Ben de Haan's 14s provided a ray of sunshine for the home club with a 3-1 victory. Bob Daley's 15s went down 0-3 to the Cubs before Arthur Dalglish's 17s suffered the narrowest



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GRASS ROOTS SOCCER

Despite all the negative publicity soccer has been receiving over the past few months, of which some may be valid, grass roots soccer has never been stronger than it is today.

In terms of numbers, over the last 5 years there has been an increase of 13% in registered players, culminating in increased pressure on clubs administering the various competitions across the state.

Suitable ground availability, especially in country areas is a major concern and it is about time sporting bodies lobbied more vigorously to the Government for increased soccer development.

The most important factor of why the Amateur Soccer Federation is so successful is the countless number of volunteers who help administer the game each weekend.

From high profile people to the normal Aussie

knockabout, nobody is different when putting the nets up on a Saturday morning at 7:00am or marking the lines and manning the canteens.

It becomes a way of life for Mums and Dads as well as their relatives and social activities and life long friendships are born here.

This week I would like to acknowledge all of you ... the volunteers who help make it a joy to watch our sons and daughters play every weekend!

WEBSITE

The NSW Amateur Soccer Federation's new website is now online! Features include, Competitions, Find-A-Club, Coaching, Links and up-to-date information on news and events in Soccer.

Another new feature coming soon will be "Club Of The Week".

"We want to promote clubs to the soccer public that are striving to improve the level of development and participation within their club", said General Manager, Michael Quaraby.

To enter your club, simply send us an email outlining your club's achievement with a team or club photo to email address:

nswasf@nswasf.com.au

To visit the new NSW Amateur Soccer Federation site go to www.nswasf.com.au

2002 CENTENARY CUP

This year Granville & District Soccer Football Association will be celebrating its Centenary and as part of their celebrations they will be hosting the NSW Amateur Soccer Federation 2002 Centenary Cup.

The Centenary Cup for Under 12's was first held in 1980, after The Australian Soccer Federation (now Soccer Australia) decided to no longer stage the 12 year old Nationals. As a result, NSW decided to conduct its own Under 12 tournament, namely the Centenary Cup.

The tournament is hosted by a different Association each year, whether it be country or metropolitan and teams from all over



off some of their country talent.

The Tournament itself is classed as a friendly tournament, even though it is a points allocated competition.

The competition will run April 14 to April 17 and will be held at the home ground of the Pendle Hill Soccer Club, Binalong Oval, Binalong Road, Toongabbie.

Teams participating this year are Western Branch (2 teams), Nepean Association, Blacktown Association, Bankstown Association, Sutherland Association, Southern Branch, Highlands Association, Kuring-gai Association, Central Coast Association, Granville Association and a team from Northern Tasmania.

Girls Play Soccer Too!

After a very successful 2001, the NSW Amateur Soccer Federation have again launched the Primary Schools Girls Soccer Program called 'WHY SHOULD THE BOYS HAVE ALL THE FUN?', which promises to be bigger and better!

The program is coordinated by our Women's Soccer coordinator, Sharon Dewar who explains that the main aim of the program is to expose more girls to the world's No.1 game - SOCCER and encourage them to join their local club.

The program is aimed at girls from Years 3 - 6 through a series of school visits where the basic techniques of passing, receiving, dribbling, shielding, defending, striking, finishing, heading, throw-ins and goalkeeping are incorporated in fun skill activities and games.

Our coaches are all experienced female and male soccer players who have represented at Association, State or National level.

Our school visits are linked into local Associations across Sydney and the Central Coast.

These Associations will be conducting Gala Days, mid week mini competitions along with Come-&-Try days for the girls to experience soccer at a club level.

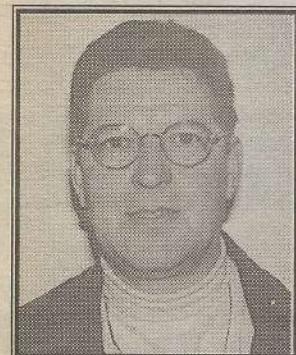
There are also competitions the girls can enter to win soccer packs (sports bag, soccer ball and drink bottle) throughout the year.

The NSW Amateur Soccer Federation encourages all girls interested in playing soccer to contact their local soccer club or check out our new website at www.nswasf.com.au.



Ashley Reinhardt

DRAGONS SEEK KNOP APOLOGY OVER "RACIST" REMARKS



By Bert van Bedaf

Melbourne Dragons chairman Liu Bing has sought an apology from Soccer Australia chairman Ian Kop, following his comments that the national soccer league "needed a Chinese club like a hole in the head".

"I was really shocked by those comments. What he said was

racist. We are seeking an apology from the Soccer Australia chairman Ian Knop about those remarks," Bing said.

"We'd like this ethnic background issue to rest. Australia is a multicultural country with people from all over the world, who work hard to get into Australian mainstream society. We don't want these racist remarks repeated in future."

"The aim of the club (Dragons) is for its supporters to come from all backgrounds, all people who love soccer. We would like to remind people that soccer is for all ethnic backgrounds. Soccer as a sport knows no boundaries. It belongs to the world," he said.

Bing said the unfortunate remarks came "on the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and China". The then leader of the Australian opposition, Gough Whitlam and



Ian Knop: Has come under fire by the Melbourne Dragons for a racist comment.

his wife Margaret travelled to China in 1972. He restored diplomatic relations with China when elected as prime minister that same year.

"His (Knop's) comments were

irresponsible and harmful to the relations," Bing said through his business associate and interpreter Benny Luo.

"The relationship is very important and it is becoming closer

every year. China is the biggest trading partner with Australia and its fifth largest export country. Trade between the two nations was \$20 billion in 2001," Bing said.

GOOD LUCK AIS

The AIS departed the shores of Australia on Tuesday, bound for Italy where the team will embark on a huge experience being apart of the prestigious Gradisca tournament held in Italy.

The 21 strong squad led by coach Steve O'Connor will be gone for 3 weeks and have been seeded in a tough group which features Italian glamour side AS Roma, Brazilian side Cruzeiro and Colombian side Atletico Colombia.

ABSW wishes all the lads the best in the tournament; updates will be evident in coming editions of the Soccer Weekly.



AIS SQUAD

DRAGONS REVEAL SUBMISSION DETAILS AND ARE TOLD TO DO MORE HOMEWORK

By Bert van Bedaf

Melbourne's latest national soccer league contender, the Melbourne Dragons will need to do more homework, if their national soccer league submission is to be successful. They also might need to wait another season before they can smoke out the opposition.

The Dragons were told to provide more information on its finances, since the submission seemed short on facts where the funds would come from.

They were told by Soccer Australia to refine their submission for the 2002/2003 season and perhaps re-submit their plans for the following season.

"The Dragons were a bit ambitious with the numbers. We will need to understand more fully



Colonial Stadium: A possible venue for the Melbourne Dragons, if included in the National League.

how the club is funded and that it can put the necessary guarantees in place," National Soccer League chairman Remo Nogorotto said.

Dragons chairman Liu Bing, on behalf of the bidding consortium, said, he was now unsure what the next step was.

"We are thinking about what to do. We don't know if we can get a licence. We would need an answer by the end of April, otherwise it will be too late for next season. If we are not successful for next season, we will try for the following season," Bring said, through his business associate Benny Luo, who was also present at the meeting.

Bing, who's been in Australia for six years, speaks limited English and preferred Luo to interpret his comments.

In its submission, the consortium stated, "The

Melbourne Dragons Soccer Club is 55 per cent owner by an Australian company Golden Star (also written as Goldenstar), which has a capital of \$6 million. The remaining 45 per cent (of the club) is owned by overseas investors (from China), an overseas soccer club (Shanghai FC) and a marketing company based in Hong Kong.

A new NSL club must pay up front a \$250,000 licence and a \$250,000 bond.

The Dragons were asking to be guaranteed a five-year term in the NSL.

In many ways, the submission by the Bing consortium offers advantages for Australian and Melbourne soccer, such as opening up Australian soccer to a Chinese population of 1.5 billion and business opportunities.

Liu Bing is president of Goldenstar International

Investment Pty Ltd and the Australia-China Sports and Culture Exchange Promotions Society, which has brought out Chinese soccer clubs to Australia during the last two years and has taken Australian clubs to China, including the Melbourne Knights.

"Soccer Australia has been talking about Asia, but it has never done anything. We know Australian soccer well and the Asian market," Bing said.

The consortium previously tried to buy into the Knights and Victorian Premier League club Bentleigh Greens with a view of using Kingston Heath Soccer Complex as its training ground. Both deals fell through.

The submission offers television coverage of Dragons NSL matches in Asia, which would "increase the chances to obtain major corporate sponsors and the profile and image of Australian soccer to an international level". China has a television audience of 500 million.

Bing said his submission showed ways of generating \$2.5 million per year. He said he believed the club could earn \$1.7 million in shirt sponsorship across two continents, combining Australian support with Asian backing, including in China.

Bing said the Dragons would consider Optus Oval, Olympic Park, Bob Jane Stadium or Colonial Stadium as playing venue options. The club initially would be aiming for crowds of up to 5,000. "We want more than that, but we believe that will take time, because this will be a new club," Bing said.

As its training ground, the Dragons would chose John Cain Reserve, in Melbourne's northern suburb of Northcote, where the Victorian Soccer Federation is setting up a base.

Bing said he wanted a multicultural squad of 20 players with possibly one player each from South America and Africa, two from Europe, one or two from Asia and the remainder from Australia and Victoria "to appeal to all ethnic backgrounds".

He said the submission was "not based on a Chinese supporters club, but a multicultural club based in Melbourne".



Remo Nogorotto: National League Chairman.

GREENS KEEP SHARKS AT BAY

By Bert van Bedaf

Port Melbourne Sharks went ahead twice and behind once to draw 3-3 with Victorian Premier League joint leaders Bentleigh Greens at Anderson Reserve last Saturday night.

Bentleigh team manager Savvas Koureas said he wasn't displeased with the result.

"We didn't come here for a draw. We tried to win the game and I thought at 3-2 that we'd won the game. But Port Melbourne got a goal back.

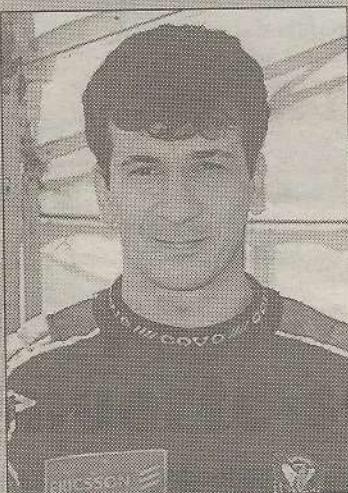
It was a fast game and both teams played well. I thought the final score was pretty fair," Koureas said.

"We were in front twice and we fell behind, but we scored again. We scored two good goals and we gave away two soft goals. We struggled to



play the ball out and we were caught out in defence," Port coach Harry Chalkitis said.

Cameron Pino crossed from the right to set up Port striker Peter Psarros, who headed home after ten minutes and it looked like the Sharks were on their way for their first home win since beating Heidelberg 6-3 in round 3.



Jim Kouris: Former National League keeper and Bentleigh star was beaten three times.

But the Greens struck back three minutes later. Robert Murone crossed from the left to the far post, where Angelo Motsiopoulos headed on target.

Port keeper Steve Wardle dived to save but spilled the ball and busy striker Juan Nilo drilled home the equalizer.

The Greens could have been a goal up in the 18th minute. Tom Karapatsos put Nilo through, but the nippy forward slipped on the wet surface on his way for a one-on-one and Wardle saved.



Ange Motsiopoulos: Bentleigh Greens star scored and played well for his side.

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE STATS

ROUND 9 RESULTS

FRI, 12 APR. 8:15 PM

Whittlesea Stallions SC 1 Preston Lions SC 1 (J. Montagnese)

SAT, 13 APR. 7:00 PM

Port Melbourne Sharks SC 3 Bentleigh Greens SC 3 (Psarros P, Poutakidis S, S. Pino M) (Karapatsos T, Motsiopoulos A, Nilo J. C.)

SAT, 13 APR. 7:30 PM

Altona Magic SC 1 Fawkner Blues SC 1 (Becvinski S)

SUN, 14 APR. 3:00 PM

Fitzroy City SC 1 Altona East Phoenix SC 1 (Vucinic D) (El Kersh M)

St Albans Saints SC 1 Heidelberg United SC 3 (Mangos S, Lazarevski N, Kakos P)

2002 PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 8

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
1. Bentleigh Greens SC	9	5	4	0	15	8	19
2. Green Gully Cavaliers SC	8	5	3	0	10	1	18
3. Port Melbourne Sharks SC	9	4	3	2	19	14	15
4. Fawkner Blues SC	9	4	3	2	14	11	15
5. Altona East Phoenix SC	9	4	3	2	13	11	15
6. Whittlesea Stallions SC	9	3	4	2	12	14	13
7. St Albans Saints SC	9	3	1	5	7	12	10
8. Fitzroy City SC	9	2	3	4	8	10	9
9. Preston Lions SC	9	2	3	4	10	13	9
10. Altona Magic SC	9	2	2	5	14	13	8
11. Heidelberg United SC	9	1	3	5	16	27	6
12. Bulleen Zebras SC	8	1	2	5	9	13	5

ROUND 10 FIXTURES

SUN, 28 APR. 3:00 PM

Altona East Phoenix SC vs. St Albans Saints SC

Bentleigh Greens SC vs. Whittlesea Stallions SC

Fawkner Blues SC vs. Port Melbourne Sharks SC

Preston Lions SC vs. Fitzroy City SC

SUN, 28 APR. 6:00 PM

Green Gully Cavaliers SC vs. Heidelberg United SC

MON, 29 APR. 8:15 PM

Bulleen Zebras SC vs. Altona Magic SC

LIONS HOLD STALLIONS TO DRAW

By Bert van Bedaf

The Preston Lions held the Whittlesea Stallions to a 1-1 draw at Epping Stadium last Friday night, despite having two players sent off in the second half.

It was a memorable first-up derby between the two sides. Played in driving rain, it netted plenty of excitement in front of a vocal 1,200 crowd.

The Lions shocked the Stallions with an opening goal after 18 minutes, but they threw away their advantage when Daniel Malina collected his second yellow in the 53rd minute and goalkeeper Pasi Schwalger copped a straight red card in the 73rd minute. As a result of the incident, referee Damir Basic also awarded a penalty, from which the Stallions equalized.

The game should have been Whittlesea's with such a huge numerical advantage, but the Lions dropped back with five defenders and held the inept Stallions at bay to take a point.

"It was a hard game from the start, but the second half became unpredictable," Preston coach Vlado Tortevski said afterwards.

"A few players disappointed me," he commented on the two send-offs.

"They were the reason we ended up playing nine against eleven. They will be punished. They let the club down and they let the boys down. We had the better of the game, if it (send-offs) had not happened, we could have scored and won the game," he said.

Malina had already received a yellow card for a bad tackle in the 33rd minute. When he was tackled shortly after the break, he retaliated and Basic immediately showed him another yellow and then the red card.

Schwalger's red came from another undisciplined charge. Going for a fifty-fifty challenge in the box, he suffered a high tackle when claiming the ball. Instead of playing on and waiting for the referee's decision, he punched his opponent and was sent off.

Correctly, Basic pointed to the spot, since the ball was still in play and Stallions captain Joe Montagnese coolly converted in the two minutes of emotion charged mayhem to level the contest in the 75th minute.

"The keeper should not have done this. He should have waited for the referee's decision," said Tortevski, who took off Preston's scorer Dimce Paney to make room for substitute 'keeper Steve Salevski.

The Lions took the initiative from the opening minutes and when Paney scored, slotting the ball home underneath Schwalger, the Stallions looked rattled.

The Epping side went through a tumultuous week after their 4-1 loss to Altona East on Easter

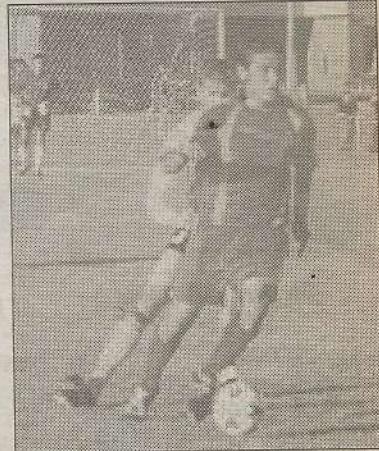
Monday.

Whittlesea coach made no secret of his disgust with the performance of midfielder Mark Silic, who left the club as a result. Silic has returned to St Albans, where he was last season.

"Mark (Silic) is a quality player, but he's gone to St Albans. It didn't work out and whichever way he took it, we are better off without him," Stubbins said.

Without Silic, the Stallions lacked in midfield, although debutante Dusko Delic proved useful. However, the home team should have made better use of

It's extra players. Applying the long ball proved fruitless against the five-men Preston wall.



Preston Lions in action.

(PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHEN GRAY)

"On paper, we should have won the game, but we didn't do enough with the ball. It was frustrating. It showed our naivety," Stubbins said.

"But (on the brighter side) I wanted a response after last week and we did earn a point," he said.

Another newcomer, Tony Giuliano had some chances in the second half, but stranded on Schwalger. Ivan Razov also failed to convert opportunities.

Preston captain Chris Emovski almost had the game won in the 69th minute when he lobbed Schwalger, but the ball landed on the crossbar and Paney headed the rebound into the 'keeper.

John Sapazovski also could have won the game for Preston, but his free shot was saved off the line by Montagnese in injury time.

Despite the draw, the Stallions continue to impress in their first Victorian Premier League season, while the Lions are improving after a poor start.

OLIVER TURNS DEVIL, SOUTH BUYS INTO CLUB

By Bert van Bedaf

National Soccer League club South Melbourne assistant coach Jeff Oliver will take over as coach of Victorian State League division one club Thomastown Devils as part of a package to upgrade Souths youth development program.

"Jeff Oliver will take over as coach next week. He will be in charge against Oakleigh," Thomastown president Fernando Dimasi said last Sunday.

Thomastown will visit the Oakleigh Cannons in round three on Friday, April 19, with Oliver in charge.

As late as last week Oliver denied rumours he was taking over at the Devils. The NSL club is currently involved in the play-offs and Oliver said he was committed to that.

"I know nothing about it," Oliver said. "My commitment is with the seniors during the finals. We're focussing on the finals. I'll see what happens after that."

Former Socceroo Ernie Tapai resigned as Devils coach a fortnight ago and joined division one club Westgate. Thomastown appointed defender John Gasparini as caretaker coach.

But Thomastown players were already talking about a South Melbourne takeover and a pressed Dimasi confirmed Oliver's appointment as well as plans to set up a youth academy at Thomastown's home ground, Partridge Reserve, involving South Melbourne's youth team.

"The Thomastown Devils will become associated with South Melbourne," Dimasi said.

Dimasi assured members the club name would not change and the club would retain its red and black colours. He confirmed four MVP/South Melbourne people would join the Thomastown board of eight members.

"But this is not a takeover or a merger. It is a relationship we will have with MVP Management, which is affiliated with South Melbourne," he said.

"It is a restructuring program that will affect senior and junior players. Thomastown will remain as Thomastown and the club's heritage will remain."

"This relationship will create a new profes-

sional image for the club.

It will put Thomastown on the map and make it a unit for youth development," he said.

Dimasi said MVP's financial contribution was "in excess of \$40,000". It is believed to be \$50,000.

The MVP Football Institute at South Melbourne is run by MVP Management, which is owned and managed by George Christopoulos, a FIFA accredited player agent and in charge of youth development and player transfers at South Melbourne.

Christopoulos confirmed the plans. "We have agreed to come over, but there are still issues that need to be resolved," Christopoulos said.

"It is all about setting up a development program. The (national youth) league is a poor league, it lasted only three months, and we've been looking at opportunities of playing in the Victorian Premier League."

"But the Victorian Premier League knocked us back. We're now looking at a partnership with a senior club. It will stimulate soccer in the northern suburbs and offers young players a career (path)," he said.

South's total investment in MVP is \$250,000, according to statements issued by the Protect South group that is running the NSL club. The youth program focuses on "recruiting the best 14-16 year old players in Victoria and Australia".

"Already Keilor Park (soccer club) has provided the club (South Melbourne) with 20 young players and the aim is to grow the program in association with more strong junior clubs," the group said.

Dimasi said South Melbourne would integrate its youth players into Thomastown's senior team to expose the South youngsters to senior level games.

Thomastown may be playing matches at local Epping stadium as well as Bob Jane Stadium. "We are negotiating to play at Epping and Bob Jane," Dimasi said.

"Partridge Reserve will be used for youth development and converted into an academy. We are talking to the council to upgrade the pitch and the venue," he said.

He said, if Thomastown would succeed in returning to the Victorian Premier League it would probably adopt the name of Northern Devils.

National Youth League

NORTHERN DIVISION FINAL SERIES RESULTS

ELIMINATION SEMI FINAL

Sunday 14 April 2002
Marconi Stadium - 4.00pm

Marconi Stallions Yth 4 QAS 0
(Anabalon 43', Santilli 53',
Own goal 76', Polito 86')

NORTHERN DIVISION LEAGUE - FINAL TABLE

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	APts
Parramatta Power Youth	26	19	0	7	85	31 57
Wollongong Wolves Youth	26	18	2	6	71	35 56
Marconi Stallions Youth	26	16	3	7	71	32 51
QAS	26	16	3	7	56	33 51
Newcastle United Youth	26	15	4	7	75	41 49
AIS	26	16	1	9	65	39 49
Sydney United Youth	26	15	2	9	58	28 47
Olympic Sharks Youth	26	12	6	8	59	35 42
Northern Spirit Youth	26	11	5	10	58	46 38
ACTAS	26	10	4	12	50	71 34
Brisbane Toro	26	8	0	18	45	93 24
NSWIS	26	4	3	19	24	73 15
Marconi Stallions Colts	26	2	2	22	16	82 8
Sydney United Colts	26	1	3	22	15	98 6

PRELIMINARY SEMI

FINAL

Sunday 14 April 2002
Melita Stadium - 7.00pm

Parra. Power Yth 2 Wollongong W. Yth 0
(Gavaghan 61', Biggins 90')

FINAL SERIES FIXTURES

PRELIMINARY

FINAL

Saturday 20 April 2002
WIN Stadium - 4.00pm

Wollongong Wolves Youth

VS

Marconi Stallions Youth

By Vincent Vartuli

Following in the footsteps of Frank Farina, Mark Viduka and Ned Zelic, Anthony Danze looks set to become another Australian Institute of Sport graduate set to achieve at the highest level. Having already amassed an astonishing 20 goals this season from his customary midfield position he rated as second top scorer in the national youth league.

An amazing feat by a midfielder. Perth Glory have been quick to react to the youngsters' feats having signed him up on a 3-year contract.

Danze played all his junior soccer in Western Australia. Playing for teams such as Sterling Toscane and Perth Italia. His potential was then spotted by West Ham and Southampton. He played a season in the West Ham Academy team and a season in the Southampton Academy team. At the tender age of 15 Danze was invited to trial at Southampton. After an impressive trial he was offered a contract. Yet the level-headed youngster declined the offer commenting "At that stage I was to young, plus my main goal was to be part of the under 17's world cup". The youngsters' mature thinking would soon pay off.

Danze went on to make 12 appearances at the under 17's level, scoring 6 goals. His efforts came to fruition with Danze being picked for the

under 17's world cup. He went on to feature in every game, even picking up the two goals that crushed Croatia and securing Australia's spot in the second round, where they would later go down to Nigeria. On the tournament Danze was quick to say that "It was a great experience playing against some of the best opposition in the world". He highlighted Brazil as one of the hardest and most skillful opposition. Danze's display in this tournament did not go unnoticed with coach Angie Postecoglou later singling him out as one of the stars of the tournament saying "Danze and Valeri are the two who have been most consistent throughout the tournament .. I expect big things from them both in the next couple of years". He was not wrong with Valeri going on to sign with Inter Milan and Danze signing up with Perth Glory.

Perth Glory signed up Danze to a 3-year contract, immediately loaning him out to the Institute of Sport. Danze is in his second year at the institute and in two weeks will embark on another journey when the AIS travel to Italy to compete in a tournament, which includes some of the great youth teams from around the world. Danze acknowledges the Institute as a great learning curve for his future endeavors saying "The whole AIS structure is tremendous. Being able to train play soccer and go to school is one of the best aspects

of the structure". Danze feels his form has been quite steady this year having a "few highs and lows". Yet this seems quite a modest summation of his form, for as a midfielder he has gone on to score 20 goals, a feat some midfielders never achieve in a lifetime of football. Yet this modesty is just another sign of the maturity shown by someone so young.

In the next few years Danze is looking to break into first team football for the Glory. He is not in any rush to go overseas. This is a breath of fresh air meaning we will not be losing another talented youngster overseas and we will be able to view the fruits of the Institute's labor in the NSL. He wants to establish himself in the NSL then head overseas, Italy or Spain being his preference. People such as Danze's parents and coaches, Steve O'Connor, Mike Lyons and John Coyne have all had their bit in influencing Danze. They seem to have done a great job, with Danze showing great potential and even better maturity beyond his



Anthony Danze: The AIS star has a huge future in the game of football.

DANZE THE DESTROYER

SOCCKET WOMAN WITH JANENE MAR

FRANCE INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT

ROUND THREE

Parc des Sports de Beaublanc, Limoges, France
JAPAN 3 (Tomoe Sakai 5m, Homare Sawa 63m, 67m) defeated CANADA 2 (Kara Lang 62m, Amber Allen 88m)
FRANCE 1 (Marinette Pichon 37m) defeated AUSTRALIA 0

MATILDAS GO DOWN TO HOSTS FRANCE IN LAST MATCH

The Matildas went down 1-0 to hosts France in the third and last match of the four-nation International Tournament last Wednesday morning Australian time in Limoges.

After previously bottom-placed Japan defeated Canada 3-2 in the opening match of the day, it provided the opportunity for the winner of the France-Australia encounter to claim first place and the trophy. The well-performed French went on to celebrate victory in front of a vocal home crowd, sending the Matildas down to fourth position.

The loss is Australia's first in a full international under coach Adrian Santrac, after a run of five wins and three draws, three games of which were against France in January 2001.

Australia started the clash in promising fashion, creating a one-on-one after just three minutes when Joanne Peters broke through on goal, only to be denied by the goalkeeper.

As the half wore on, France began to dominate proceedings, and were rewarded in the 37th minute. Star striker Marinette Pichon, who recently became France's first signing in the American professional league, burst past the last defender into the box with pure speed before slot-

ting the ball home from a narrow angle. In the second half, the spirited Australians stepped up in response to the challenge to put France under pressure and set up a lively finish to the deciding clash. The Matildas' best opportunity came in the 61st minute, Peters' strike skimming the crossbar. In the end however, the experience of the French allowed them to hold out and achieve the result that clinched the silverware.

National Coach Santrac summed up by looking longer term, saying, "Congratulations to France who played well to deserve their victory. These three games have been invaluable to assist our players with preparing for the World Cup Qualifiers."

Australia: Kell, Wainwright, Starr, McShea (Wilson 88), Tann, Davies (Thomson 28), Heppenham (Garrick 70), Forman, Peters, Black, Golebiowski (Thomas 82).

Final Points Ladder*:
France 9pts; Japan 7; Canada 7; Australia 5.
(*4 pts for a win; 2 for a draw; 1 for a loss; 0 for forfeit etc)

Previous Results -

Round One

Stade de la Pepiniere, Poitiers

AUSTRALIA 0 drew with CANADA 0
FRANCE 1 (Stephanie Mugneret-Beghe 60m) defeated JAPAN 0

Round Two

Stade Lebon, Angouleme

AUSTRALIA 1 (Kelly Golebiowski 31m) drew with JAPAN 1 (Kasajima 89m)
CANADA 2 (Kara Lang 11m, Andrea Neil 30m) defeated FRANCE 0

YOUNG MATILDAS SET FOR DO-OR-DIE QUALIFIERS

The Young Matildas remain focused on winning Oceania's single berth to the inaugural FIFA U19 Women's World Championship at the upcoming qualification tournament in Tonga despite the news of the late withdrawal of two countries from their group, changes to the draw and the team's travel arrangements.

Last week, Papua New Guinea dropped out of the event, and then Vanuatu, leaving a field of seven for the event (although this is still more than has ever competed in a senior women's Oceania qualifiers). PNG's withdrawal is surprising, as they are the one smaller nation who has always fielded a side in senior qualifiers since day one in 1991.

With both these withdrawals from Group B, host nation Tonga was the team which was randomly drawn across from Group A to join Australia and Cook Islands. The event was also shortened by one day, with the final now scheduled for Friday 3 May.

The changes mean the Young Matildas have just two group matches (as opposed to New Zealand's three), and a gap of four days with no action leading into the semis.

Said National Youth Coach Mike Mulvey of the situation, "We have our group games which we need to win to top our group, then the semifinal and the final if that's all we're focused on. Before any teams dropped out, we knew we had to win five games. Now there's one less game, but the simple fact remains that we must win every game to make sure we are Oceania's representative at the World Championship."

The Young Matildas assemble in Sydney tomorrow morning (Wed) for a 3-day training camp before heading to the Tongan capital of Nuku'alofa this Saturday.

"We're getting together for a brief camp, where obviously every minute is very important," said Mulvey. "We have two games included in those three days before we depart for Tonga and continue our preparations there for our first game on Wednesday. Sometimes it can be perceived that things are not ideal, but we've got to play the cards we've been dealt and ensure we maximise the time we are together in these final preparations."

Group A: New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa, American Samoa
Group B: Australia, Cook Islands, Vanuatu

Match Schedule :

Tongan National Stadium

Tuesday 23 April, 4.00pm

GROUP A

American Samoa v Fiji - 6.00pm

New Zealand v Samoa

WED 24 APRIL, 4.00PM

GROUP B

Tonga v Australia

THU 25 APRIL, 4.00PM

GROUP A

American Samoa v New Zealand - 6.00pm

Fiji v Samoa

FRI 26 APRIL, 4.00PM

GROUP B

Cook Islands v Australia

SAT 27 APRIL, 4.00PM

GROUP A

Samoa v American Samoa - 6.00pm

New Zealand v Fiji

MON 29 APRIL, 4.00PM

GROUP B

Tonga v Cook Islands

Wed 1 May, Semifinals

Fri 3 May, 3rd Place Playoff and Final

THE YOUNG MATILDAS :	
Elissia CANHAM	QLD
Catherine CANNULI	NSW
Hayley CRAWFORD	NNSW
Emma DAVISON	NSW
Lisa DE VANNA	WA
Katie GILL	NNSW
Lana HARCH	QLD
Lisa HARTLEY	ACT
Selin KURALAY	VIC
Luisa MARZOTTO	ACT
Collette McCALLUM	NSW
Kate McSHEA (capt)	QLD
Caitlin MUNOZ	ACT
Amber NEILSON	NNSW
Karla REUTER	QLD
Thea SLATYER	NSW
Lorissa STEVENS	NNSW
Stacey STOCCO	SA

Lovell stuns Rangers with late winner while Viduka keeps Champions League hopes alive for Leeds

A late strike from Australia international Stuart Lovell kept Livingston's UEFA Cup hopes on track with a shock 2-1 defeat of Rangers.

Lovell's effort made Livi the first non-Old Firm club to beat Rangers this season and also handed Alex McLeish his first defeat since taking charge at Ibrox.

With the scores locked at 1-1, the Livi skipper came off the bench to replace an injured Cherif Toure Maman.

After a mazy run and cross from teammate David Fernandez, Lovell launched himself into an acrobatic scissor kick that flew past Stefan Klos in the Gers goal a minute before full-time.

McLeish said: "I think Livi deserved it. They look in the driving seat for Europe and they deserve that because they have had a fantastic season."

Meanwhile in the English Premier League Mark Viduka kept Leeds United's Champions League hopes alive with a first-half winner in yesterday's 1-0 result at Aston Villa.

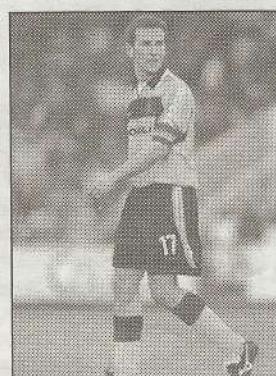
Midway through the first-half, Viduka turned the Villa defence before sending keeper Peter Enckelman

the wrong way for his 16th goal of the season - and his fourth in five games.

Leeds boss David O'Leary said, "I am just delighted with the three points, particularly under the circumstances and with the amount of players we have out, especially centre-back."

"I knew we had to be strong in that department and that we would have a lot of defending to do because Villa Park is a hard place to come."

"They were chucking everything at us at the end and we were lucky that a couple of things went our way."



Stuart Lovell: Australian international scored a spectacular winner against Rangers.

Wollongong News

Wolves Swansong - 2002 was not a season of success, and it was a rather sad ending with two heavy losses. Coach Ron Corry was not impressed with some of his senior players.

They had not acted as professionally as he expected. Furthermore the club's supporters are feeling let-down by a poor showing in those final games. It is hard to see any positives from such a disastrous season. Perhaps the youngsters emerging during the soccer year are a ray of hope on the horizon. From them can be rebuilt a more competitive squad for next season. Wolves coach Ron Corry has confirmed he is staying put.

In terms of player acquisitions the coaching staff are awaiting directions from Soccer Australia regarding the new look league structure as well as business decisions by the Board and shareholders before contracting players required. It is rumoured as many as five Wolves seniors out of contract may move on. On the other hand circumstances could change and eager newcomers may fit in well to give Ron Corry a fighting chance of improving on a poor soccer year. The club is always bigger than individuals and will survive never mind who leaves now. Looking at past performances the coaching staff could very well decide to shed some players lacking commitment and who seem to play for their own prestige rather than the club. A critical survey will apply, closing the door on some, opening it for others.

Wolves Cubs on Top - one shining light at the Wolves is the Youth Grade team wrapping up 2nd spot on the competition and two chances at the Grand



Final. The team under coach Eddie Tesoro achieved a most successful year and deserves to be applauded. Many fans enjoyed good soccer being played prior to first grade home games. The young squad consist of Scott Whalan - Phillip Weston - Shane Manning - Shane Lockhart - Wade Scherini - David Boscoscuro - Ben Bartlett - Ben Jarman - Mathew Weresko - Leighall Dellis - Daniel Aliffi - Verdon Jangajac - Harvey Rodriguez plus various over-age players required to obtain match fitness and told to play youth grade. The team faces now minor Premier Parramatta Power for a place in the Grand final - well done to the coach and players for reaching that semi final goal, and best of luck to them in the finals.

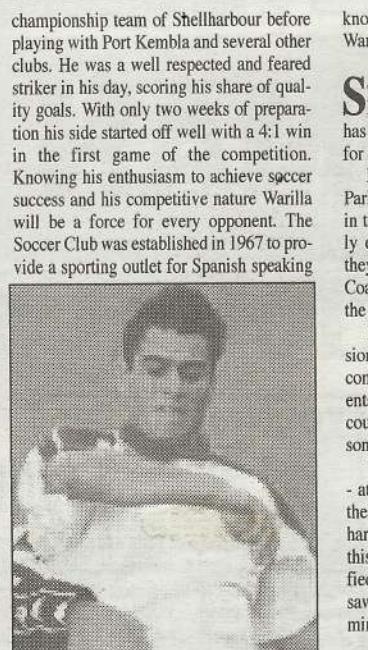
Elite Soccer Academy - Wolves coach Eddie Tesoro and Daniel Barrett have announced the intention to start an elite soccer academy targeting first the Sutherland Shire.

A 20 week set-up is programmed conducting trials for children aged 10 to 14 and then selecting a squad of players to take part in the academy. The plan is to take a group of teams over to Europe early next year in the School Holidays. For more details please contact Eddie Tesoro on mobile 0407 791 346 or Daniel Barrett on 0438 265 165. The Wolves coaches are eager to talk to the Illawarra Junior body to eventually include local players in a similar set-up.

Kiama Showpiece - the home ground of Kiama Soccer Club is Kiama Leisure Centre, situated in an old picturesque quarry.

The ground has now been updated to meet the criteria for the Premier League. The Club and Kiama Council have done an excellent job to prepare the field, installing amongst other items a new perimeter fence around the main playing area (whose surface is lush and green), an extension of western side cyclone fence enclosing the whole facility, a protective awning in front of the canteen, new referees facilities and a new ticket box, all completed within a well suited playing complex. The soccer club hopes to do well in the higher league.

Warilla Wanderers Soccer Club - have appointed a new coach in Barry Robinson, one of the promising young crop of soccer coaches taking over gradually. Barry himself only retired few seasons ago from active play, having come through Junior Soccer with Shellharbour from u/7 to u/18's, then playing first grade in the



Daniel Aliffi: Has done well in the Wolves youth team this season.

people. The side's home ground is King Mickey Park, George Street, Warilla. The senior club has a long and distinguished history of success in both local competitions, and now the focus is on improvement as a healthy multicultural soccer club. The vision is to be the "Southern Premier club in the Illawarra Soccer Association" by continuing to grow its supporter base, player strength and sponsor relations. The new coach has the drive, ability and soccer



Eddie Tesoro: Will start an Elite Soccer Academy.

Parramatta Power: Northern Youth League Premiers

By Mark Stavroulakis



Parramatta Power's first grade squad might be out of contention for the Semi-Finals this year, but the young youth side has held the name of the Power well this season.

Mainly built up of 16-17 and 18-year-olds, Parramatta Power Youth finished up this season's Northern Division Premiers with 57 points - a point above nearest rivals Wollongong Wolves.

The team had scored a mammoth 85 goals this season, an incredible achievement from the young lads.

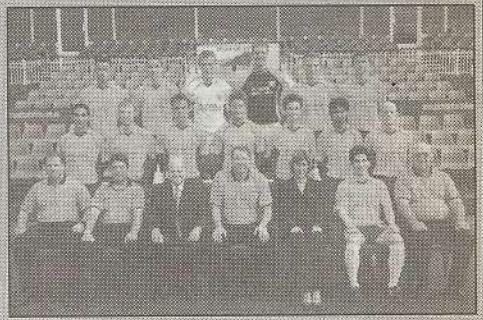
Last week saw the first phase of

the Preliminary Finals with the Power taking on the hungry Wolves.

Goals from Peter Gavaghan and Matty Biggins gave the Power a two-nil win and a ticket to the Northern Division

Finals.

The squad boasts a number of future young stars with defender and former U17 international Predrag Bojic, exciting midfielders Peter Gavaghan and Michael Brown,



Parramatta Power Youth Squad 2002.

Highlands United v Shellharbour City at Renwick Oval. The home side drew their first match, the visitors dropped the points. This could go either way, both sides have to show their true colours and will be eager to do better this time around.

Juniors - Gala Day Winners - The pre-season Gala Day brings annually all teams from U/10 to U/18's boys and girls together, playing knock-out rounds over three days. This year's Gala Day winners are;

U/10 Unanderra - U/11 Fernhill - U/12 Girls Helensburgh - U/12 Balgownie - U/13 Albion Park - U/14 Girls Albion Park - U/14 Oak Flats - U/15 Oak Flats - U/16 Girls Woonona - U/16 Port Kembla - U/17 Balgownie - U/18 Girls Woonona - U/18 boys Woonona.

Juniors Roo-Balls Winners - Bulli's U/9's won the Wolves home games Roo Ball competition played at WIN Stadium during the NSL season. They defeated Figtree in the final. Coached by Kevin Lewis - a former Bulli Premier League striker, the successful U/9's fielded Luke Lewis - Mitchell Hand - Oskar Prus - Daniel Watts - Martin Gallagher - Jake Meusberger - Callan Tanner - Kurt Meusberger - Ben Thicknesse - Josh Hutton - Kevin Mott - Murray Wood - Joel Baker.

The team was presented with the Cup trophy, each player with a medallion and also all 20 participating teams received a momento for their participation. During the season the youngster's play was much applauded by the spectators attending the Wolves home fixtures.

SOCER DATES

ICU PREMIER LEAGUE

ROUND 3 W/E 20TH APRIL

Kiama v Comiston Lions

Pictor Rangers v Port Kembla

West Illawarra v Lyssaght

Tarrawanna v Bulli

Cringila Lions v Balgownie

Kembla v Wollongong Olympic

ICU CONFERENCE LEAGUE

ROUND 3 ON 20TH APRIL

Warilla Wanderers v Albion Park

University v Bellambi

South Coast Utd v Berkeley

Shoalhaven City v Dapto Shellarbour

City v Fernhill

Barbarians v Helensburgh

Northern United v Highlands

Woonona v Ruse

Junior Soccer Round 2 starts on 20th April - ages 15 years to 18 years will play their games on Sundays. Juniors are



Ron Corry: Has confirmed he is staying put for next season.



National League Report Card



By Stuart Jones

The end of the National League home and away season has come. Six teams are left battling it out for the biggest prize in Australian Soccer, the NSL trophy. Perth Glory claimed the Minor Premiership



7TH

PARRAMATTA POWER

(P24, W10, D4, L10, F34, A30, PTS34) Parramatta Power has been hit by drama all season yet came within two point of making the top six.

Their off field dramas have been well documented with David Mitchell announcing his plans to leave the club with quite a few matches still remaining.

On the field Wayne O'Sullivan did well in midfield and the youngsters like Holman shone.

There were some youngsters in the team who look to have the skills but to be really great players will have to learn humility. They caused tension in the side and add to that the off field dramas and the side did very well to come so close. Players who may not have all the skills like Peter Bennett and Steve Eagleton starred as they showed the commitment that others could learn about. Overall a disappointing performance and the crowds yet again failed to materialize.

Next season Nick Theodorakopolis is in charge and he will certainly be looking at the playing staff. Gone will be the likes of Tobin, Bennett, Barrett, and Eagleton, replaced by the likes

of Anastasiadis, Costanzo, Souris and even Mendez perhaps? It will be a season of reckoning for the Power. Should they succeed then the Eels might continue the club after the five year tenure is up. Should they fail this time it will be terminal.

Brett Holman: Young Power star performed well in his first year at National League level.

The Stallions problem was inconsistency. Marconi played a couple of halves of football that were amongst the best displays by any league team in the country, but they were unable to turn them into 90 minute performances. In a sense the return of Chad Gibson disrupted the team and he failed to make a huge impact.

Off the field the club has seen a disaster with the bottom falling out of home attendances. The Board is no longer a soccer board so the once big boys of the league now struggle with the rest of the clubs. Players no longer want to come to Marconi because of the name. Rale Basic has come on board for next year and promises to bring back that appeal to the Stallions and certainly the supporters would hope this be the case. He too will have a restricted player budget but believes he can build the club into a big club once more. That will be dependant on

the support he gets from the Board. Marconi will probably lose the likes of Angelo Costanzo and possibly John Maisano. There are questions over the likes of Mark Babic as well. How they replace these players will be an indication of what future lies in store for the Stallions.

Angelo Costanzo: Had a brilliant year with the Stallions.

9TH

MARCONI STALLIONS

(P24, W8, D6, L10, F32, A36, PTS30) This season looked like it was going to be tough for Lee Sterrey and he has done a remarkable job in the circumstances.

A lot of people in Australian football are quick to criticize and Lee does get flack from certain quarters. However he had a restricted budget yet got a group of players to believe in themselves and almost make the top six. His biggest plus has been the development of youngsters like Brownlie, Brosque and Beauchamp. They are the future of Marconi.



10TH

SYDNEY UNITED

(P24, W6, D6, L12, F27, A37, PTS24)

In the end a season that started with so much promise ended in failure. The first coach they had lined up did not make seasons start and in the end Branko Culina came in right at the last to run a team he had no say in the building of. The player purchases looked okay and included the likes of Kresimir Marusic and the Santalabs. Actually the club had the look of Culina's last spell at the club when Ante Milicic joined the club.

However weaknesses were shown

up from early on with the lack of pace and no goal scoring support for Milicic and Menapi a real problem. In fact the loss of Tommy Podeljak to the Sharks was a real problem. The club's large wage bill was a hindrance in a side not performing on the pitch and through the season a club already not doing well lost quality players like Marusic and Milicic.

By seasons end there was talk of Marko Franovic not supporting the club financially and that would be a huge blow to the club's survival. In the short run there is normally a new benefactor who comes along to keep the club going. The club's demise has been talked of for ten years but it survives still.

The club needs money and players. If Culina stays (and he has an extra year on his contract) it will only be on his terms and if that is the case then some players will be gone. Already the

likes of Arambasic have gone through the season. It would not be a surprise if there were no support for Culina that the likes of Chi Chi Mendez move to another club. If Branko stays there will be changes to the club's playing roster to support the youngsters he has put so much time into this season.

Commins Menapi: Sydney United striker tried his best in a tough season.

11TH

FOOTBALL KINGZ

(P24, W3, D5, L16, F28, A57, PTS14)

The only good thing for the Kingz this season is that it ended. They seemed to have purchased well and new coach Mike Peterson had just taken South Melbourne to the Grand Final. Things did not start well; even in preseason there were rumours of problems with over zealous training regimes.

The season started poorly for the side and soon Peterson was gone. Then Kevin Fallon entered the frame and soon Wynton Rufer was gone as well. By this stage Con Boutsianis had not played for the club and soon controversy cut a swathe across the Kingz as he signed for South Melbourne.

The Kingz claimed part of the deal was Boutsianis would not play for Souths against the Kingz yet not only did he play, but he scored.

From there the season just got worse and in the end they won just three games all season, conceding 57 goals and scoring just 28 in 24 games. They failed to win out of New Zealand. Then by season's end Sky TV were looking to sell most of their share of the club but Soccer Australia were concerned with Chris Turner and company taking completely over.

while on the other end of the table; the Kingz grabbed the wooden spoon. Seven clubs are now in off-season mode, all gearing up for next season's start to the National League.

The following is a report card on how each club went, and where they go from here.

8TH

NORTHERN SPIRIT

(P24, W9, D7, L8, F36, A39, PTS34) Mick Hickman's side finally overcame the home match voodoo and ended up playing some great football over the closing weeks. However it was a case of too little too late.

At home they failed to make a lot of efforts on target count and actually had one of the lowest attempts on goal at home in the league. With a strike force of Cervinski and Candozo you would expect more shots, and certainly the introduction of Dobbie for the final games changed all that.

Hickman had brought some of his own players in but was also hamstrung by the fact there were a lot of players at the club

on big money that he had not brought in but had to use. Julian Watts was solid at the back but the transformation of Noel Spencer and Simon Bell into solid defenders was the stand out. Bell was a completely different player than that at Marconi and he was voted the Spirit's player of the season. Rob Trajkovski started poorly but by seasons end was getting back on song and hopefully he can take that into next year. In midfield Scott Thomas stood out. He will be back but huge question marks appear over the heads of the likes of Enes and Foster, with the likes of Cranney also possibly on their way out.

Spirit will decide in the next couple of weeks on the future of coach Hickman and there are some coaches asking about the job already. Rangers will continue to supply the financial strength for the coaching staff so a decision needs to be made quickly so proper planning can be completed by the coach. There should be a reduction in playing staff and perhaps a high turnover of players coming off big contracts with the funds being unavailable in the NSL now to keep them on the salaries they are used to.

Off the field the crowd support dwindled in huge numbers and for Spirit to survive they need to redress this situation. Somewhere there are about 10000 ex-Spirit supporters who should be being encouraged again by the club and being encouraged to come along to games once more. If crowds of 2000 keep appearing then the whole long term future of Spirit has to be questioned.

Pablo Cardozo: Ended up with 14 goals to his name and played some terrific football.

10TH

WOLLONGONG WOLVES

(P24, W6, D7, L11, F28, A43, PTS25) The champions could not overcome the loss of Chipperfield, Horsley and Petrovski. They could no longer score, in the end scoring the same amount of goals as the bottom placed Kingz.

Ron Corry brought in some experienced players like Babic, McDonald and Farah but all were in Youth League by seasons end. His purchase of Tony Perinich turned out bad as well.

On the park Corry relied on

youngsters like Sharland, and Wells. They will have to step up next season as Wollongong are sure to lose the likes of Anastasiadis, Reid, Cecoli, Souris amongst others. Questions have even been raised as to whether Corry will be there himself. The club have had a couple of good years but now will need to rebuild. This season's poor run has cost them financially as well so the club will be cutting the wage bill and that is why high paid players like Stuart Young's future has been called into question.

Off the field they have no choice but to stay at WIN Stadium as Brandon Park is being torn down, which is a real shame.

The short term looks rough for the Wolves and the process of rebuilding might take a while. Certainly it is a shame that some experienced heads

won't be around to guide the youngsters, although some of them have already spurned the opportunity to learn from those older players because of their poor attitudes to learning. If that continues then Wollongong's rise could take quite a long time.

Dean Anastasiadis: Wolves keeper on the move next year?

12TH

ADELAIDE CITY

(P24, W4, D8, L12, F27, A34, PTS20) Perhaps the summary of City is the fact that despite giving free entry to their last match less than 4000 people turned up.

City started the season with reports that one of 'their boys' was no longer to be a part of the club. Fortunately room was found for Aurelio Vidmar but by seasons end two institutions were gone, Zoran Matic and Serge Melta.

The season saw a shortage of

funds for the team. There were some away matches that the club did not fly in a full squad for the games. By the end they were selling players off, like Alex Moriera. Chairman Bob D'Ottavi was manager by season's end and is now looking for a new man to take charge. The club can't afford to lose players like they did at the beginning of this season, the likes of quality players Bradley Hassell and Louis Brain. They also had players quit mid season, like Jeff Campbell and Peter Cestic, so a new positive attitude has to be instilled in the club for it to survive.

Four wins all season will be a disappointment to the club but

worse is the drop in support in a city that not long ago supported two NSL clubs. What happens next season will depend on new investors coming into the club so that players can be attracted back to the City of Churches.

Aurelio Vidmar: Force star rumoured to be the new coach next season.

13TH

FOOTBALL KINGZ

(P24, W3, D5, L16, F28, A57, PTS14)

The only good thing for the Kingz this season is that it ended. They seemed to have purchased well and new coach Mike Peterson had just taken South Melbourne to the Grand Final. Things did not start well; even in preseason there were rumours of problems with over zealous training regimes.

The season started poorly for the side and soon Peterson was gone. Then Kevin Fallon entered the frame and soon Wynton Rufer was gone as well. By this stage Con Boutsianis had not played for the club and soon controversy cut a swathe across the Kingz as he signed for South Melbourne.

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From there the season just got worse and in the end they won just three games all season, conceding 57 goals and scoring just 28 in 24 games. They failed to win out of New Zealand. Then by season's end Sky TV were looking to sell most of their share of the club but Soccer Australia were concerned with Chris Turner and company taking completely over.

Although they felt they were in the right the Kingz dropped legal threats in regards to the Boutsianis case, even though the case never went to a SA trial.

In the last couple of weeks there has even been stories of further trouble in the coaching ranks with Shane Rufer reported at one stage to have stopped attending training, although the club has denied any walk out.

The future? There are serious doubts Kevin Fallon will be back and the ownership picture needs to be cleaned up. If both matters are not sorted quickly then attracting players will be a tougher ask than it already is.

Not only that but the player budget is apparently going to be slashed so a player overhaul would be

unlikely. In fact the whole of the future of the club is in question in some quarters even though they have a guarantee.

Some around the league believe the club should not be in the NSL but the most likely outcome is they will play next season at least.

Paul Urlovic: The Kingz striker was one of his side's stand-out players.



GROUP B



Group Two is a mixture of the old and the new, the known and unknown. The two favourites would have to be Spain and Paraguay but Slovenia could pull off an upset and make it into second spot. South Africa could play an upset or two but they are not expected to be the strongest of the African teams in the World Cup this time around. None of these four teams have ever played each other in the World Cup finals.

HEAD TO HEAD PREVIEW

Paraguay v South Africa Busan 17:30 Sunday 2nd June 2002

South Africa's debut match last World Cup was a 3-0 loss to eventual winners South Africa. Paraguay had a 0-0 draw with Bulgaria in their first match in 1998. Overall Paraguay have lost two, drawn two and won only one of their opening games. Should South Africa have any chance of getting second they need at least a point from this game.

Spain v Slovenia Gwangju 21:30 Sunday 2nd June 2002

Spain will look to start strongly against a first up effort from Slovenia. However Spain's first matches in the last three World Cups have been less than auspicious, losing 2-1 to Nigeria in 98, drawing 2-2 with South Korea in 94 and drawing 0-0 with Uruguay in 1990.

Spain v Paraguay Jeonju 19:00 Friday 7th June 2002

This should be the match that determines first place in the group and without Chilavert still Paraguay will go in as underdogs. However Spain will be under a lot of pressure this time around and could self implode.

South Africa v Slovenia Daegu 16:30 Saturday 8th June 2002

Whoever loses this match wont make the second round. Both sides will probably be looking for their first wins in the competition so there will be a lot to play for. Slovenia would probably go in slight favourites.

South Africa v Spain Daejon 21:30 Wednesday 12th June 2002

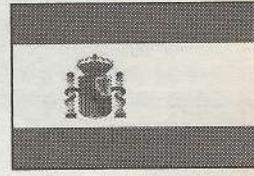
This should be a game to wrap things up for Spain but should South Africa defeat Slovenia and Spain not take full points against Paraguay then the pressure could really be on the Europeans.

Slovenia v Paraguay Seogwipo 21:30 Wednesday 12th June 2002

Paraguay will be looking to wrap up first or second spot on the table in this match and should come away with the points in full.



SPAIN



Spain has never won this tournament yet with its success in club football you would think they should have.

Again they are looking to right this and this may be there best time as Spanish club sides have done extremely well in Europe in since France 1998.

World Cup Finals Matches

Spain PLD 40 W16 D9 L15 F61 A48 Pts 36
(HT F24 A22) Pens F4 A5

Major Competitions Spanish Results

- 4th place 1950 FIFA World Cup
- Quarter-final 1986 FIFA World Cup
- Quarter-final 1994 FIFA World Cup
- Champions UEFA European Championship 1964
- Runners-up UEFA European Championship 1984
- Champion Olympic Games 1992
- Runners-up Olympic Games 2000

Qualified

Winners European Group 7
Pld8 W6 D2 L0 F21 F4 Pts20



Spain Team

Schedule

Spain v Slovenia Gwangju 21:30
Sunday 2nd June 2002

Spain v Paraguay Jeonju 19:00
Friday 7th June 2002

South Africa v Spain Daejon 21:30
Wednesday 12th June 2002

Odds

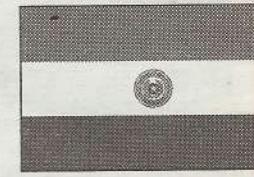
\$11 as at 1st April 2002

A Country Profile:

Kingdom of Spain
Population: 39,167,744
Form of Govt: Constitutional Monarchy
Population density: 77.6 per square km
Life expectancy: 77.7
Infant Mortality: 6.4 (per 1000)
Language: Spanish
Literacy Rate: 97.1%
Religion: Roman Catholic 99%
Economy: Industry 21%, Agriculture 11%, Services 68%



PARAGUAY



This is Paraguay's sixth appearance in the Cup and last time around they made the second round for the first time.

The first two group games they do not have Chilavert in goals and he seems to lift his side. If they can manage some points from those games then they should get through again.

World Cup Finals matches

Paraguay PLD 15 W5 D6 L4 F19 A27 Pts15
(HT F9 A14)
No penalty shootouts

Major Competitions Results

Copa America winners 1953, 1979

- Runners up Copa America 1922, 1929, 1947, 1949, 1963

Qualified

Fourth Placed South American side
Pld18 W9 D3 L6 F29 A23 Pts30



Paraguay Team

Schedule

Paraguay v South Africa Busan 17:30
Sunday 2nd June 2002

Spain v Paraguay Jeonju 19:00
Friday 7th June 2002

Slovenia v Paraguay Seogwipo 21:30
Wednesday 12th June 2002

Odds

\$67 as at 1st April 2002

A Country Profile:

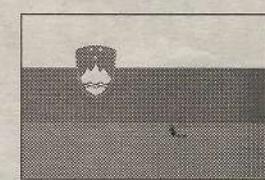
Republic of Paraguay
Population: 5,434,095
Form of Govt: Republic
Population density: 13.4 per square km
Life expectancy: 72.4
Infant Mortality: 36.4 (per 1000)
Language: Spanish
Literacy Rate: 91.9%
Religion: Roman Catholic 90%
Economy: Industry 21%, Agriculture 49%, Services 30%



GROUP B



SLOVENIA



Slovenia has been a surprise packet in Europe. The former Yugoslav republic has done a great job in just qualifying.

Now they look to gain full points from South Africa and try and overhaul Paraguay to challenge for a round two position.

Finals Matches overall

This is Slovenia's debut in the World Cup Finals

Major Competition results

— First round UEFA European Championship 2000

Qualified

Runners up European Group One

Play offs: Slovenia 3 Romania 2
(total after 2 legs, 2-1, 1-1)

Schedule

Spain v Slovenia Gwangju 21:30
Sunday 2nd June 2002



Slovenian Team

South Africa v Slovenia Daegu 16:30
Saturday 8th June 2002

Slovenia v Paraguay Seogwipo 21:30
Wednesday 12th June 2002

Odds

\$161 as at 1st April 2002

A Country Profile: Republic of Slovenia

Population: 1,970,570

Form of Govt: Republic

Population density: 97.3 per square km

Life expectancy: 75.4

Infant Mortality: 5.3 (per 1000)

Language: Slovenian

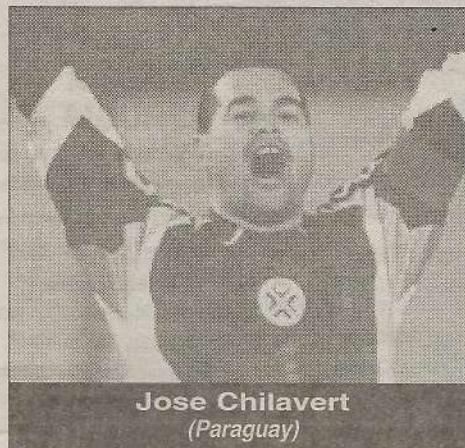
Literacy Rate: 96%

Religion: Roman Catholic 96%

Economy: Industry 46%, Agriculture 2%, Services 52%



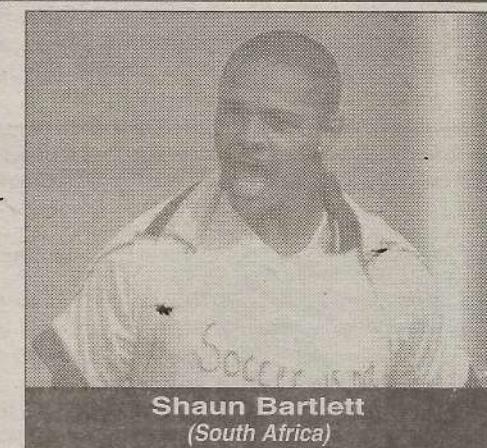
Raul
(Spain)



Jose Chilavert
(Paraguay)



Zlatko Zahovic
(Slovenia)

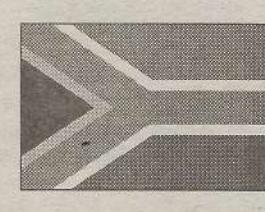


Shaun Bartlett
(South Africa)



SOUTH AFRICAN
FOOTBALL
ASSOCIATION

SOUTH AFRICA



South Africa has qualified for the second successive time. Last time quite a bit was expected of them but they failed to deliver.

This time less is expected and this may work into their hands as they can go into the matches with a "we can't lose anything" attitude. It may well come off.

World Cup Finals results

South Africa PLD 3 W0 D2 L1 F3 A4 Pts 2
(HT F1 A3)
No penalty shootouts

Major Competitions results

African Nations Cup Winners 1996
Qualified African Nations Cup Finals 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002

Qualified

Winners Group 5 Africa.
Pld6 W5 D1 L0 F10 A3 Pts16



South African Team

Schedule

Paraguay v South Africa Busan 17:30
Sunday 2nd June 2002

South Africa v Slovenia Daegu 16:30
Saturday 8th June 2002

South Africa v Spain Daejon 21:30
Wednesday 12th June 2002

Odds

\$151 as at 1st April 2002

A Country Profile: Republic of South Africa

Population: 43,426,386

Form of Govt: Republic

Population density: 35.6 per square km

Life expectancy: 54.8

Infant Mortality: 52 (per 1000)

Language: Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Pedi, Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, Zulu

Literacy Rate: 81.4%

Religion: Christians 68%

Economy: Industry 24%, Agriculture 14%, Services 62%

RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

As the Serie A reaches a climax in the next few weeks it is great to see that no one club can as yet lay claim to the title. Inter, Roma and Juventus cannot be ruled out.

This has been the same situation in the Serie A for the last few years, in that the Scudetto (league title) has been decided on the final day.

Should Inter win the league, their first Scudetto since 1989, it would make them the fifth different club in five consecutive years to take the honours.

The last four in recent order have been Roma, Lazio, AC Milan and Juventus.

This is proof that the Serie A is not dominated by one or two clubs as some other European leagues have been.

◆◆◆◆

Roma have been in the news in recent days for two very different reasons. Firstly, against Venezia away recently they received some very dubious penalties, and, secondly, their coach Fabio Capello has signed until 2005.

Venezia v Roma is a game that may have a big influence on the Scudetto outcome this year. Just when relegated Venezia thought that they had the game won 2-0, Roma were awarded two controversial penalties.

None other than Pierluigi Collina awarded these penalties in the last three minutes. Collina has recently been named as FIFA's number one referee. His bald head is recognised worldwide.

Both penalties were dubious but Collina, who had clear vision of both incidents, had no doubt. So what is all the fuss about?

In recent years Juventus have been given, according to the Italian media, some very favourable treatment by referees.

Juventus General Manager, Luciano Moggi, wasn't impressed especially since the title is yet to be decided. He immediately went on television.

"If Juventus were awarded those penalties, we would have a week of television programmes dedicated to them," he declared.

Frankly, who could blame him? He is absolutely correct. The Italian media has been very kind to Roma and there is no doubt that they would have given Juventus very different treatment.

The other good news for Roma is that Capello will stay on until 2005 as coach. He says that he will retire from coaching after that.

However, there is no doubt that Capello will not be lost to football. In fact the man who has won league titles with AC Milan, Real Madrid and Roma, would be an ideal choice to coach the national team some time down the track.

Capello, diplomatically and modestly, says that he is not thinking about anything beyond Roma. He is the best club coach in my view in world football.

Capello has achieved so much at three different clubs in two different countries. Many thought that he would fail at Roma because he didn't have the players. How he has proven them wrong.

Even if Capello achieved nothing more in his career, he would go down as the most successful coach to date at Roma. The same can be said for him at AC Milan. He won four league titles in six years there while Arrigo Sacchi, who is fondly remembered by some at AC Milan, won one in five years there.

The only interesting thing to note over the next few years will be the progress of Capello's relationship with ace striker Vincenzo Montella.

Montella has signed until 2006 with Roma and the pair haven't exactly been amicable in the last two years. The one certainty is that Montella will have to conform. Capello is not one to be intimidated. He brings to the bench the same values that he held as a player.

Capello was never one to disrespect a coach. He accepted all decisions - good or bad. He was a classy and elegant midfielder who represented his country. He was a beautiful distributor of the ball who displayed great confidence and style. On the field things were done his way.

As a coach nothing much has changed. Class, elegance, confidence and style summarise Capello and, once again, on the field things are done his way.

◆◆◆◆

The last word this week is reserved for Fiorentina. In short, they are a laughing stock. They were this way when I was in Italy back in January and three months on they are still the same.

Now Ottavio Bianchi, the man who took over as coach from Roberto Mancini in January, has been moved upstairs and been made Club President.

The club under flamboyant President, Vittorio Cecchi Gori, was run in a similar fashion to Basil running the hotel in the 1970's English sitcom *Fawlty Towers*.

One can only hope that Bianchi does a better job with this once proud club. It won't be hard to beat but, sadly, it will be in the Serie B that Bianchi will have to display his skills in his new role.

RONALDO DOUBLE KEEPS INTER CLEAR OF ROMA



Inter's Ronaldo is about to be tackled by Brescia's Fabio Petrucci.

INTER 2
BRESCIA 1

Ronaldo struck twice in the last ten minutes to steal a dramatic victory for Internazionale at home to Brescia.

The away side had taken the lead on the half-hour, Pep Guardiola sending Francesco Toldo the wrong way from the spot after Marco Materazzi had fouled Daniele Bonera.

But, just as Inter's grasp on top spot seemed to be slipping, Ronaldo capitalised on an error from Alessandro Calori to level with ten minutes remaining.

And three minutes later the Brazilian fired a crucial second, rattling home a majestic right-foot effort after Emre Belozoglu had knocked the ball down for him.

ROMA 3
PARMA 1

Roma bounced back from the disappointment of last week's draw with Venezia with a 3-1 victory over Parma. Marco Delvecchio gave them the lead on eight minutes after a slick one-two with Gabriel Batistuta on the edge of the box.

Antonio Cassano added a second five minutes from the break, firing home after Sebastian Frey had blocked the initial attempt, but Sabri Lamouchi pulled one back three minutes into the second half.

Salvatore Fresi pulled one back on 63 minutes after Fabio Pecchia's effort had come back off the wood-work, but Piacenza held on to all but erase their relegation fears. Eusebio di Francesco added a second five minutes into the second half.

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enough for Lecce, who need a miracle to avoid relegation after going down 3-2 to Chievo.

Nicola Legrottaglie had given the away side a 16th minute lead, Simone Perrotta grabbed their 68th minute equaliser, and Eriberto hammered the final nail in the coffin 12 minutes from time.

UDINESE 1
VERONA 0

Udinese are also in serious danger after a 1-0 defeat at home to Verona, who moved five points clear of the drop zone. Mauro Camoranesi diverted Martino Melis' cross into the path of Mario Frick to fire the all-important goal on 33 minutes.

The game warmed up in the second half, and Mirko Pileri, Roberto Muzzi and Marco Zanchi were all sent off.

VENEZIA 0
PERUGIA 2

Perugia all but secured their Serie A future after two goals in the space of three first half minutes set them on their way against relegated Venezia.

David Baiocco gave them the lead on 36 minutes, and Fabio Bazzani added a second.

ATALANTA 1
TORINO 1

Daniel Berretta gave Atalanta the lead on the quarter hour against Torino, but Ramalho Franco levelled five minutes after the break as the game between two sides without much to play for finished level.



Lazio's Jaap Stam challenges Fiorentina's Adriano.

This Week

April 21

Brescia - Fiorentina
Chievo - Inter
Lazio - Verona
Milan - Roma
Parma - Atalanta
Perugia - Bologna
Piacenza - Juventus
Torino - Lecce
Udinese - Venezia

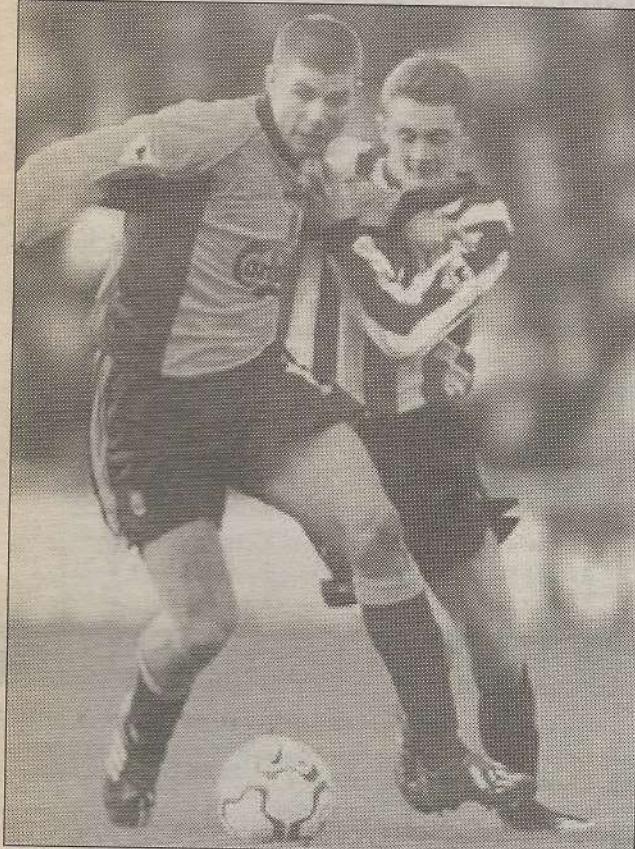
Atalanta 1 Torino 1, Bologna 1 Piacenza 2, Fiorentina 0 Lazio 1, Inter 2 Brescia 1, Juventus 1 Milan 0, Lecce 2 Chievo 3, Roma 3 Parma 1, Venezia 0 Perugia 2, Verona 1 Udinese 0.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pts
1. Inter	31	19	8	4	55-28	65
2. Roma	31	17	12	2	52-24	63
3. Juventus	31	17	11	3	56-23	62
4. Chievo	31	13	11	7	53-44	50
5. Bologna	31	14	7	10	38-36	49
6. Milan	31	12	12	7	42-32	48
7. Lazio	31	12	11	8	41-29	47
8. Torino	31	10	11	10	35-36	41
9. Atalanta	31	11	8	12	37-46	41
10. Perugia	31	11	7	13	34-44	40
11. Piacenza	31	10	9	12	45-39	39
12. Verona	31	11	6	14	36-43	39
13. Parma	31	10	7	14	38-44	37
14. Brescia	31	7	13	11	37-47	34
15. Udinese	31	9	7	15	38-49	34
16. Lecce	31	6	9	16	34-50	27
17. Fiorentina	31	5	7	19	28-56	22
18. Venezia	31	3	8	20	28-57	17



ENGLAND

LIVERPOOL MOVE UP TO SECOND WITH GRITTY WIN AT SUNDERLAND



Steven Gerrard holds off Sunderland's George McCartney.

DERBY COUNTY 2 NEWCASTLE UTD 3

Newcastle United overcame a two-goal deficit to deal Derby County an unprecedented fifth consecutive defeat and stay in contention for the hotly-contested fourth Champions' League place.

The Magpies were hopelessly off the pace until French midfielder Laurent Robert put them back into the game on 73 minutes when he banged in at the near post.

Kieron Dyer equalised three minutes later after a Nolberto Solano cross before Tresor Lomana Lua Lua secured a vital win when he tapped home from six yards.

Malcom Christie had put Derby ahead when he hit home immediately after the break after a Lee Morris shot was blocked. Morris doubled the lead with a snap-shot half-volley that went in off the inside of the post soon after.

Morris, who performed tremen-

dously, had been unlucky not to score on 20 minutes when he almost made contact following good work from Christie.

ASTON VILLA 0 LEEDS UTD 1

Leeds United remain four points behind Newcastle despite handing a 1-0 defeat to Aston Villa.

However, David O'Leary's side are now just one point behind Chelsea, the other contender for the fourth Champions' League place.

Leeds were generally in the driving seat and a Robbie Keane goal was disallowed for offside on seven minutes.

The early pressure paid off when Mark Viduka hit his 15th goal of the campaign by slotting home following a neat build-up featuring David Batty and Keane - but that was not before he had missed a sitter.

TOTTENHAM 1 WEST HAM UTD 1

West Ham United staged a late comeback to draw 1-1 with Tottenham Hotspur, who now have their work cut out to qualify for a Uefa Cup place through a potential seventh-place finish.

Teddy Sheringham broke the deadlock when he knocked home a rebound following a Steffan Iversen strike early in the second half but Ian Pearce thundered a 25 yard half volley past Kasey Keller after Simon Davis had cleared a Steve Lomas cross.

NEXT WEEK'S FIXTURES

- Chelsea vs Man Utd
- West Ham Utd vs Sunderland
- Bolton Wanderers vs Tottenham Hotspur
- Leeds United vs Fulham
- Leicester City vs Aston Villa
- Liverpool vs Derby County
- Middlesbrough vs Blackburn Rovers
- Newcastle United vs Charlton Athletic
- Southampton vs Everton

CHARLTON 1 SOUTHAMPTON 1

Charlton Athletic were held 1-1 by Southampton at the Valley in a match in which Richard Rufus netted at both ends.

Rufus claimed the opener when he latched on to a Jason Euell throw-in to flick past Saints keeper Paul Jones, who had failed to reach the ball.

Saints felt harshly done by not to be given a penalty in the final stages when Joe Tessem was hauled down in the box and were duly rewarded when Rufus headed a Jason Dodd cross into his own net.

EVERTON 2 LEICESTER CITY 2

Everton could only manage a 2-2 stalemate with already-relegated Leicester City, whose only remaining aim this season is to avoid Watford's ignominious record of 25 defeats in a Premiership season.

Deane curled his first into the top corner, then capitalised on a mix-up in the home defence between Alan Stubbs and Steve Simonsen.

But Nick Chadwick got one back and Duncan Ferguson grabbed a late point when he stroked in with minutes to go.

FA CUP SEMI-FINALS

Fulham 0 Chelsea 1

Chelsea clinched an FA Cup Final confrontation with Premiership rivals Arsenal in Cardiff as they edged out Fulham in an eventful encounter at Villa Park.

John Terry's goal just before half-time proved the difference between the west London neighbours on a night of disappointment for Jean Tigana's team.

Fulham's Louis Saha may ultimately be credited with an own goal, but no-one wanted to take the deciding strike away from Terry.

Chelsea deserved their victory after creating and wasting a host of chances, but Fulham will once again regret enjoying plenty of possession without delivering the final punch.

Chelsea took the lead in the 39th minute corner. Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink's corner bounced of Mario Melchiot and Terry scored via the legs of Saha.

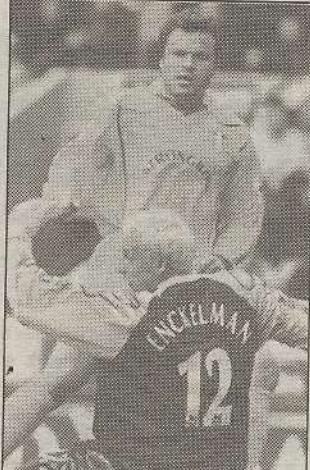
Fulham mounted a spirited second half fightback, but as so often in their season, their approach play was not matched by their finishing.

SUNDERLAND 0 LIVERPOOL 1

Liverpool, overcame Sunderland 1-0 at the Stadium of Light to guarantee their place in the Champions' League and move to second, a single point behind Arsenal.

Liverpool, always dangerous on the counter attack, struck to deadly effect to take the lead after 54 minutes.

Steven Gerrard's pass released Owen, and he provided the perfect instinctive finish to life the ball over the oncoming Thomas Sorensen.



Leeds' Mark Viduka fires past Villa goalkeeper Peter Enckelman and the post in their 1-0 victory.

Middlesbrough 0 Arsenal 1

Arsenal stayed on course for the double as Middlesbrough's Gianluca Festa put through his own goal to send them to the FA Cup Final in Cardiff.

Festa's first-half blunder was harsh on Middlesbrough as Steve McLaren's underdogs made a magnificent attempt to end Arsenal's assault on Cup and league.

Middlesbrough flew out of the traps, rattling Arsenal with a succession of tackles and attacks that left the Gunners fighting for their lives early on.

Veteran Dean Windass brought a superb save from Wright after 11 minutes as he turned away a powerful volley.

And youngster Luke Wilshire missed a perfect opportunity to put Middlesbrough ahead when he shot tamely wide from eight yards after Alen Boksic had unlocked the Arsenal rearguard.

Seven minutes before half-time Arsenal took an undeserved lead as Festa put through his own net. The Italian defender inadvertently stuck out his right leg and diverted Henry's corner past Mark Schwarzer.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Sunderland 0 Liverpool 1, Charlton Athletic 1 Southampton 1, Everton 2 Leicester City 2, Derby County 2 Newcastle United 3, Aston Villa 0 Leeds United 1, Tottenham Hotspur 1 West Ham United 1, Blackburn Rovers 0 Chelsea 0.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pts
1. Arsenal	33	21	9	3	68-33	72
2. Liverpool	34	21	8	5	56-26	71
3. Manchester Utd	34	22	4	8	83-44	70
4. Newcastle United	34	19	7	8	65-46	64
5. Chelsea	35	16	13	6	63-32	61
6. Leeds United	35	16	12	7	51-36	60
7. West Ham United	34	13	8	13	42-51	47
8. Tottenham Hotspur	35	13	7	15	46-50	46
9. Middlesbrough	34	12	9	13	34-40	45
10. Aston Villa	35	10	13	12	39-43	43
11. Southampton	35	11	9	15	42-50	42
12. Charlton Athletic	35	10	12	13	36-44	42
13. Everton	35	10	10	15	40-51	40
14. Bolton Wanderers	34	9	12	13	42-54	39
15. Sunderland	35	10	8	17	26-45	38
16. Fulham	34	8	13	13	32-41	37
17. Blackburn Rovers	33	9	9	15	42-43	36
18. Ipswich Town	34	8	9	17	40-56	33
19. Derby County	35	8	5	22	32-59	29
20. Leicester City	35	4	11	20	26-61	23

FIRST DIVISION

Coventry 0 Millwall 1, Barnsley 0 Norwich 2, Bradford 0 West Bromwich 1, Crystal P 2 Preston 0, Gillingham 1 Manchester C 3, Grimsby 3 Burnley 1, Nottingham 2, Crewe 2, Portsmouth 0 Watford 1, Rotherham 2 Birmingham 2, Sheffield U 0 Walsall 1, Stockport 3 Sheffield W 1, Wolverhampton 1 Wimbledon 0.

	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1. Man City	45	30	6	9	54	96
2. West Bromwich Albion	45	26	8	11	30	86
3. Wolverhampton Wanderers	45	25	10	10	33	85
4. Millwall	45	21	11	13	19	74
5. Birmingham City	45	20	13	12	19	73
6. Burnley	45	20	12	13	7	72
7. Norwich	45	21	9	15	7	72
8. Preston	45	19	12	14	11	69
9. Wimbledon	45	18	13	14	7	67
10. Crystal Palace	45	20	6	19	10	66
11. Coventry City	45	20	6	19	7	66
12. Gillingham	45	17	10	18	-4	61
13. Sheff Utd	45	15	15	15	1	60
14. Watford	45	16	11	18	7	59
15. Nottm Forest	45	12	18	15	0	54
16. Bradford City	45	15	9	21	-7	54
17. Portsmouth	45	13	14	18	-10	53
18. Grimsby Town	45	12	14	19	-20	50
19. Walsall	45	13	11	21	-20	50
20. Rotherham Utd	45	10	19	16	-12	49
21. Sheff Wed	45	12	13	20	-22	49
22. Crewe Alexandra	45	11	13	21	-31	46
23. Barnsley	45	10	15	20	-28	45
24. Stockport	45	6	8	31	-58	26

SECOND DIVISION

Blackpool 5 Bristol C 1, Bournemouth 3 Chesterfield 1, Brighton 0 Swindon 0, Bury 1 Colchester 3, Cambridge 2, Tranmere 1, Cardiff 2 Notts County 1, Huddersfield 2 Port Vale 1, Queens PR 0 Brentford 0, Reading 2 Peterborough 2, Stoke 1 Wrexham 0, Wigan 3 Northampton 0, Wycombe 2 Oldham 1.

	P	W	D	L	G	D	PTS
Brighton	45	24	15	6	65	-42	87
Reading	45	23	14	8	69	-42	83
Brentford	45	24	10	11	76	-42	82
Cardiff	45	22	14	9	74	-50	80
Stoke	45	23	10	12	66	-39	79
Huddersfield	45	21	15	9	64	-45	78
Bristol C	45	21	9	15	67	-52	72
Queens PR	45	19	14	12	60	-48	71
Oldham	45	17	16	12	76	-65	67
Wigan	45	16	15	14	64	-49	63
Tranmere	45	16	15	14	63	-	

WORLD

Spanish Primera Liga

VALENCIA ONE POINT CLEAR AS REAL CRASH AT OSASUNA

Real Madrid handed the initiative in the Spanish title race to Valencia, as they slumped to a shock defeat away to Osasuna.

The stage seemed set for the champions to move two points clear at the top after Valencia could only draw with Real Mallorca on Saturday evening, but Osasuna pulled off a major upset as they convincingly won 3-1 in El Sadar.

Fernando and Alfredo gave the Navarrese side a two goal lead in the first half, before Ivan Helguera was sent off for Real on the stroke of half time.

Beleaguered striker Fernando Morientes pulled Madrid back into the game four minutes after the break, but Ivan Rosado put the game beyond doubt when he scored his second of the game on 34 minutes.

Pablo Rotchen netted for the Catalans midway through the second half, but Depor held on to record a valuable victory in their bid for the title.

Toni Soldevilla was dismissed for the visitors for a reckless challenge on 66 minutes and Mauro Silva followed him down the tunnel ten minutes later for a direct red.

Javier Saviola scored twice for Barcelona in a hard-fought 3-2 victory over struggling Alaves in the Nou Camp and boosted their chances of a Champions' League place next term.

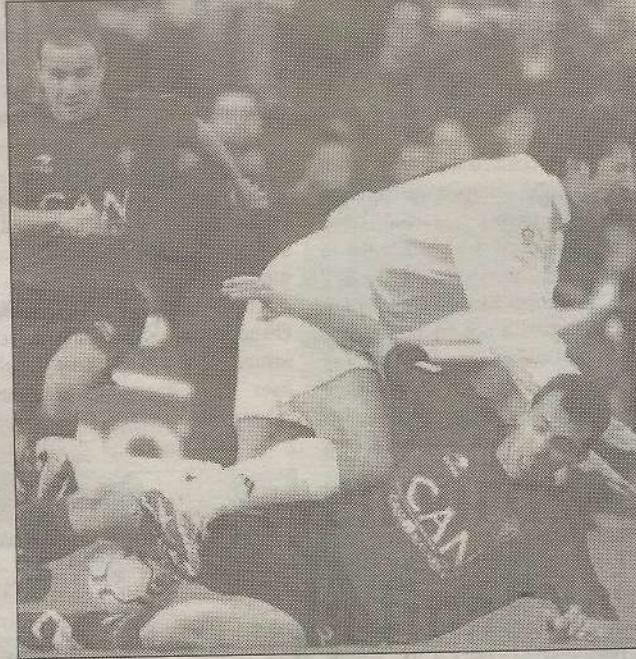
The Argentinian scored after 14 minutes as Barca assumed control of the game, despite the absence of injured duo Patrick Kluivert and Rivaldo.

Fabio Rochemback doubled the home side's lead midway through the second half, but Magno Mocelin set up a grandstand finish when he pulled the Basques back in the match nine minutes from time.

But Saviola ensured three points for Charly Rexach's side when he scored his second and Barca's third. Alonso clawed a second goal back for the visitors in a nail-biting finish.

Celta Vigo lost ground in the race for a Champions' League place when they crashed 2-1 at Villarreal who triumphed despite having Inaki Berroa sent off early in the second half.

Victor was the home side's hero as he scored two goals in six minutes, the second a penalty, as the Yellow Submarines came from behind to secure victory.



Madrid's Luis Figo is bundled over by Osasuna's Patxi Puna.

Jesuli had given the Galicians the lead just after the hour mark and they looked on course for a comfortable victory after Berroa's dismissal for a second yellow card, before Victor Munoz's side impressive comeback.

Malaga's bid for a Uefa Cup place received a blow when they went down 2-1 at Real Sociedad, who saw had Inigo Idiakiz dismissed in the second half.

The Uruguayan Dely Valdes gave the Andalucians the lead just after half an hour, but a rejuvenated Sociedad side levelled four minutes before the break through Alonso.

Luis Alberto then gave the Basque Country side the lead twenty minutes from time and Roberto Olabe's side held on despite being reduced to ten men a minute later.

Tenerife caused the upset of the weekend as they came from behind to beat high-flying Real Betis 2-1 in the Heliodoro and rekindle their hopes of staying up.

Denilson gave the visitors a fifth minute lead, but second half goals from Bono and Esteban Fuertes saw the Canary Islanders secure an impressive win.

The Ruiz Mateo family may be staying put as Rayo Vallecano took a giant step towards securing their first division future with a 1-0 victory over Valladolid.

A goal from Jean-Francois Hernandez on the stroke of half time was enough to give the Madrileños victory.

Savo Milosevic scored a 90th minute penalty to earn Real Zaragoza a point in an action packed 2-2 draw with Athletic Bilbao in La Romareda.

Santiago Aragon gave Zaragoza a ninth minute lead, but Ismael Urzaiz drew Athletic level before the break and Aitor Larrazabal put them ahead with a penalty midway through the second half.

Bilbao looked to be heading for their first victory after three consecutive



Villarreal's Victor Manuel Fernandez (r) tries to get a tackle in on Celta Vigo's Peter Luccin.

Osasuna 3 Real 1, Zaragoza 2 Atletico 2, Tenerife 2 Betis 1, Barcelona 3 Alaves 2, Villarreal 2 Celta 1, Sevilla 1 Las Palmas 1, Rayo Vallecano 1 Valladolid 0, Real Sociedad 2 Malaga 1, Deportivo 3 Espanyol 1, Mallorca 1 Valencia 1.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pts
1. Valencia	34	17	12	5	44-26	63
2. Real	34	18	8	8	65-37	62
3. Deportivo	34	18	7	9	57-38	61
4. Barcelona	34	16	9	9	57-33	57
5. Celta	34	14	12	8	60-42	54
6. Betis	34	13	14	7	36-28	53
7. Atletico	34	13	10	11	48-58	49
8. Malaga	34	12	12	10	40-39	48
9. Alaves	34	15	3	16	38-40	48
10. Espanyol	34	12	8	14	42-49	44
11. Valladolid	34	11	9	14	37-52	42
12. Sevilla	34	10	11	13	45-39	41
13. Villarreal	34	10	10	14	42-46	40
14. Real Sociedad	34	11	7	16	41-49	40
15. Las Palmas	34	9	12	13	37-43	39
16. Mallorca	34	10	8	16	37-48	38
17. Osasuna	34	9	11	14	32-44	38
18. Rayo Vallecano	34	9	10	15	38-50	37
19. Zaragoza	34	9	9	16	32-48	36
20. Tenerife	34	9	8	17	27-46	35

WORLD LEAGUES

DUTCH FIRST DIVISION

RKC 1 Utrecht 2, Groningen 0 Vitesse 1, PSV 2 Feyenoord 0, Sparta 0 Ajax 4, AZ 2 Willem II 2, Fortuna 2 Twente 0, NAC 1 NEC 3, Den Bosch 3 Roda 1, De Graafschap 1 Heerenveen 2.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pt
1. Ajax	31	19	7	5	68-34	64
2. PSV	30	18	6	6	65-29	60
3. Feyenoord	30	17	6	7	63-25	57
4. Heerenveen	30	16	7	7	53-24	55
5. Vitesse	31	14	12	5	38-29	54
6. NAC	31	14	8	9	51-47	50
7. Utrecht	30	13	8	9	57-46	47
8. RKC	31	12	6	13	42-40	42
9. NEC	31	12	6	13	36-51	42
10. Willem II	30	10	11	9	50-49	41
11. Twente	31	9	10	12	38-40	37
12. AZ	31	10	7	14	35-42	37
13. Roda	31	8	9	14	32-45	36
14. Den Bosch	31	9	6	16	39-50	33
15. Groningen	31	9	6	16	38-57	33
16. De Graafschap	30	9	5	16	38-49	32
17. Sparta	31	4	11	16	26-71	23
18. Fortuna	31	3	7	21	25-66	16

BELGIAN EERSTE KLASSE

Mouscron 1 Anderlecht 1, Lokeren 0 Antwerp 0, RWDM 1 Lierse 0, Sint-Truiden 0 Genk 1, Westerlo 0 La Louviere 1, Charleroi 2 Aalst 1, Germinal 4 Beveren 1, Lommel 2 Gent 4, Standard 1 Brugge 1.

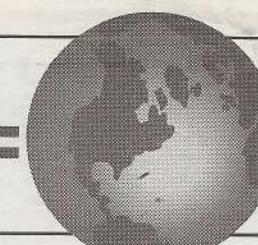
	P	W	D	L	FA	Pt
1. Genk	31	19	10	2	79-39	67
2. Brugge	31	21	3	7	68-35	66
3. Anderlecht	31	16	11	4	64-34	59
4. Mouscron	31	16	5	10	65-35	53
5. Standard	30	14	10	6	52-33	52
6. Gent	31	14	10	7	55-46	52
7. Lokeren	31	14	9	8	39-29	51
8. Sint-Truiden	31	14	4	13	44-43	46
9. Germinal	30	9	14	7	57-44	41
10. Charleroi	31	11	6	14	38-53	39
11. La Louviere	31	10	8	13	35-51	38
12. RWDM	31	11	4	16	40-52	37
13. Westerlo	31	9	7	15	45-54	34
14. Lommel	31	9	7	15	48-62	34
15. Lierse	31	8	8	15	51-60	32
16. Antwerp	31	6	10	15	41-61	28
17. Aalst	31	4	8	19	27-66	20
18. Beveren	31	2	8	21	30-81	14
Auxerre 2 Sochaux 0, Bastia 3 Lens 1, Guingamp 2 Bordeaux 1,						

FRENCH CHAMPIONNAT

Lille 1 Monaco 1, Olympique (L) 0 Montpellier 0, Metz 3 Rennais 1, Nantes 2 Lorient 0, Sedan 0 Troyes 0, Olympique (M) 1 Paris Saint Germain 0.

	P	W	D	L	FA	Pt
1. Lens	32	17	10	5	50-26	61
2. Olympique (L)	32	18	6	8	58-31	60
3. Auxerre	31	16	9	6	42-31	57
4. Paris Saint Germain	32	14	13	5	41-23	55
5. Lille	32	14	10	8	38-32	52
6. Bordeaux	32	14	8	10	33-28	50
7. Troyes	32	12	8	12	37-34	44
8. Sochaux	32	11	9	12	38-40	42
9. Nantes	32	11	7	14	33-37</td	

WORLD



SCOTTISH FIRST DIVISION



Lorenzo Amoruso opens the scoring in their 2-1 loss to Livingstone.

LIVINGSTONE STUN RANGERS AS CELTIC ROLL ON

Newly-crowned back-to-back champions Celtic moved to within one game of making more history after thumping beleaguered Dunfermline 5-0 at Parkhead on Saturday.

Martin O'Neill's all-conquering men secured their first consecutive title success in 20 years with victory over Livingston last week. But a John Hartson double and goals from Paul Lambert, Jamie Smith and Momo Sylla took the Glasgow giants to within one win of maintaining a 100 per cent home record throughout the season for the first time in the club's 114-year history.

Celtic are also just one point away from equalising last season's points tally of 97 having dropped just nine points.

But Dunfermline were as bad as Celtic were impressive and failed to make it much of a contest, even though the home side were without Henrik Larsson and Chris Sutton.

A spectacular late winner from substitute Stuart Lovell all but booked Livingston's place in the UEFA Cup next season with a dramatic 2-1 home victory against Rangers. Lorenzo Amoruso had given the visitors an early lead only for Barry Wilson to level the scores. Kilmarnock striker Michel Ngonge ensured a rough return for former manager Bobby Williamson. The former Watford striker struck the only goal of the game in the 18th minute to ensure victory over Williamson's Hibernian side.

Dundee United grabbed all three points against a lacklustre Motherwell side with a narrow 1-0 victory, their first win over them this season. Steven Thompson was on hand to score the winner in the 67th minute, giving the youngster a timely boost ahead of his inclusion in the Scotland squad for the friendly against Nigeria on Wednesday.

Two goals in the last three minutes prevented Aberdeen from securing a UEFA Cup place for next season as Hearts staged a late comeback at Pittodrie to win. Jambos defender Andy Tod had taken advantage of an error by debutant Dons goalkeeper Mark Peat to open the scoring in the third minute. But Kevin Rutkiewicz hit back for the home side just five minutes later before striker Robbie Winters appeared to have hit the winner with 11 minutes remaining.

However, the Edinburgh side refused to lie down and defender Stephane Mahe hit home with only three minutes of the game remaining. Then, Hearts completed an amazing fightback when Kevin McKenna grabbed a last-gasp winner.

Livingston 2 Rangers 1, St. Johnstone 0 Dundee 1, Aberdeen 2 Hearts 3, Celtic 5 Dunfermline 0, Dundee United 1 Motherwell 0, Kilmarnock 1 Hibernian 0

	P	W	D	L	F-A	Pts
1 Celtic	35	31	3	1	88-16	96
2 Rangers	35	24	8	3	78-25	80
3 Aberdeen	35	15	7	13	48-46	52
4 Livingston	35	14	10	11	43-41	52
5 Hearts	35	13	6	16	47-50	45
6 Kilmarnock	35	12	9	14	38-48	45
7 Dunfermline	35	12	8	15	39-57	44
8 Dundee	35	12	7	16	38-50	43
9 Dundee United	35	11	8	16	35-57	41
10 Hibernian	35	8	10	17	44-54	34
11 Motherwell	35	9	7	19	43-63	34
12 St. Johnstone	35	5	5	25	24-58	20

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

DORTMUND DEFEAT PUTS TITLE IN REACH FOR LEVERKUSEN

Bayer Leverkusen received a huge boost in their campaign to lift their first ever German league title when closest rivals Borussia Dortmund slumped to defeat on Sunday.

A goal after 48 minutes from Swedish international striker Jürgen Pettersson gave Kaiserslautern a 1-0 home win over Dortmund, the UEFA Cup finalists and former European champions.

The decisive goal on Sunday, in front of 40,000 people at the Fritz Walter Stadium in Kaiserslautern, came when Pettersson rose to head in a cross from Mario Basler.

In the other Sunday match, 21,000 fans watched VfB Stuttgart play out a goalless draw with FC Energie Cottbus.

On Saturday Bayern Munich bounced back from their UEFA Champions League exit with a crucial victory that kept alive their hopes of reaching next year's competition.

Bayern were 2-1 winners over FC Nürnberg and moved up to third after Schalke 04 went down 3-0 at Werder Bremen. Leaders Bayer Leverkusen gave some hope to second-placed Borussia Dortmund by being held 1-1 at Hamburger SV.

In Nuremberg, Bayern, who were knocked out of Europe by Real Madrid on Wednesday, had two of their South American stars to thank for victory. Brazil striker Giovane Elber put them on the way in the 13th minute and Peruvian forward Claudio Pizarro seemingly made the game safe three minutes before half-time. However, Nürnberg hit back through Jacek Krzynowek's penalty in the 73rd minute but Bayern held on for a vital three points.

They are now third with 59 points from 31 matches, and are one point above Hertha BSC Berlin in fourth. Hertha moved up thanks to an early Alex Alves goal that ensured a 1-0 win at home over Hansa Rostock. Schalke dropped down to fifth after the 3-0 reverse in Bremen.

Leverkusen, who reached the Champions League semi-finals on Tuesday, were held 1-1 in Hamburg. They are now on 66 points and five clear of Dortmund, who play away at 1. FC Kaiserslautern tomorrow. Hamburg actually took the lead after five minutes but German international Oliver Neuville levelled only eight minutes later.

Bayer Leverkusen received a huge boost in their campaign to lift their first ever German league title when closest rivals Borussia Dortmund slumped to defeat on Sunday.

Hamburg's Eduardo Romeo jumps in to challenge Jens Nowotny of Bayer Leverkusen.

Stuttgart 0 Energie 0, Kaiserslautern 1 Borussia (D) 0, Nürnberg 1 Bayern 2, Borussia (M) 0 Wolfsburg 2, 1860 München 5 Freiburg 2, Cologne 2 St. Pauli 1, Hamburger 1 Bayer 1, Werder 3 Schalke 04 0, Hertha 1 Hansa 0

	P	W	D	L	F-A	Pts
1 Bayer	31	20	6	5	74-34	66
2 Borussia (D)	31	18	7	6	54-28	61
3 Bayern	31	17	8	6	58-23	59
4 Hertha	31	17	7	7	58-33	58
5 Schalke 04	31	17	7	7	49-31	58
6 Kaiserslautern	31	16	5	10	54-46	53
7 Werder	31	15	5	11	48-38	50
8 Stuttgart	31	12	9	10	38-35	45
9 1860 München	31	14	3	14	51-53	45
10 Wolfsburg	31	11	7	13	51-47	40
11 Hamburger	31	9	10	12	41-49	37
12 Borussia (M)	31	9	10	12	36-46	37
13 Energie	31	9	7	15	33-52	34
14 Hansa	31	9	6	16	32-46	33
15 Nürnberg	31	8	4	19	29-53	28
16 Freiburg	31	5	9	17	30-58	24
17 Cologne	31	5	8	18	20-57	23
18 St. Pauli	31	4	10	17	33-60	22

GREEK FIRST DIVISION

AEK AND OLYMPIAKOS WIN TO SET UP EXCITING TITLE CHASE

League leaders AEK strolled to a 3-0 win over Iraklis, setting up a tense title-decider against champions Olympiakos.

The Athens side dominated the game throughout, and were gifted the lead when Antonis Natsouras scored an own goal. Demis Nikolaidis and Ilja Ivic scored the second and third goals to seal the points.

Olympiakos were indebted to two late Stelios Yiannakopoulos strikes which allowed the champions to stay in touch with AEK.

Panachaiki had stunned the Piraeus side as Dimitris Ioannou scored just before half-time.

There seemed to be an upset on the cards, but Olympiakos staged a late fight-back, thanks to Yiannakopoulos's double strike and another goal from Giovanni in the final 15 minutes.

Olympiakos now trail AEK by three-points, but have a superior goal-difference, so a victory on Saturday would all but guarantee them the title.

Panathinaikos kept their slim Champions' League qualification hopes alive by hammering Aegaleo 4-1, thanks largely to a hat-trick from Croatia striker Goran Vlaovic. Veteran striker Krzysztof Warzycha grabbed the fourth.

The Touba stadium was witness to nine goals, as PAOK ran rampant against Akratitos.

PAOK raced into a 3-1 lead by half-time, but the second-half proved just as lively with the score finishing 6-3. Giorgos Georgiadis claimed a hat-trick for the home side.

Xanthi sealed a place in next season's semi-finals on Tuesday, with the score finishing 6-3. Giorgos Georgiadis claimed a hat-trick for the home side.

Stelios Giannakopoulos in full stride for Olympiakos. He grabbed a brace as his side defeated Panachaiki 3-1.

Elsewhere, Aris and Panionios shared the spoils in a 1-1 draw which satisfied neither team, while Ionikos eased their relegation fears by beating OFI 2-1.

Aris Saloniaka 1 Panionios 1, Xanthi 1 Ethnikos Astir 0, AEK Athens 3 Iraklis Saloniaka 0, Aegaleo 1 Panathinaikos 4, Panachaiki Patras 1 Olympiakos 3, Ionikos 2 OFI Crete 1, PAOK Saloniaka 6 Akratitos 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AEK Athens	24	18	1	5	56	22	55
Olympiakos	24	15	7	2	60	26	52
Panathinaikos	23	13	7	3	43	20	46
PAOK	24	13	6	5	50	37	45
Xanthi	24	11	6	7	31	22	39
Iraklis	24	8	8	8	29	33	32
Panionios	24	7	10	7	32	32	31
OFI Crete	24	8	6	10	29	32	30
Aris	24	7	8	9	23	27	29
Aegaleo	24	6	5	13	24	43	23
Ionikos	23	5	7	11	18	38	22
Akratitos	24	5	5	14	26	39	20
Ethnikos Astir	24	4	5	15	18	38	17
Panachaiki	24	2	9	13	22	52	15

WORLD LEAGUES

CROATIAN FIRST DIVISION

Dinamo 2 Rijeka 3, Cakovec 0 Hajduk 3, Hrvatski dragovoljac 2 Osijek 2, Pomerac 1 Zagreb 0, Sibenik 1 Varteks 0, Cibalia 3 Marsonia 2, Zadar 7 TSK 1, Kamen Ingrad 1 Slaven Belupo

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Zagreb	27	19	5	3	68	22	62
2 Hajduk Split	27	18	5	4	52	26	59
3 Varteks	27	16	5	5	55	31	54
4 Dinamo Zagreb	27	16	5	6	50	27	53
5 Rijeka	27	13	6	8	41	32	45
6 Slaven Belupo	27	9	9	9	29	31	36
7 Pomerac	27	10					

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

FINALS SERIES

ELIMINATION FINAL 1ST LEG

SOUTH MELBOURNE

(V Coveny 50, 53)

BRISBANE STRIKERS

VENUE: Bob Jane Stadium.

CROWD: 8,450.

REFEREE: C. Diomis.

CAUTIONS: C Boutsianis (SM) 32, P Kisnorbo (SM) 96, S Stefanutto (BS) 33, S McLaren (BS) 34, L Drake (BS) 78.

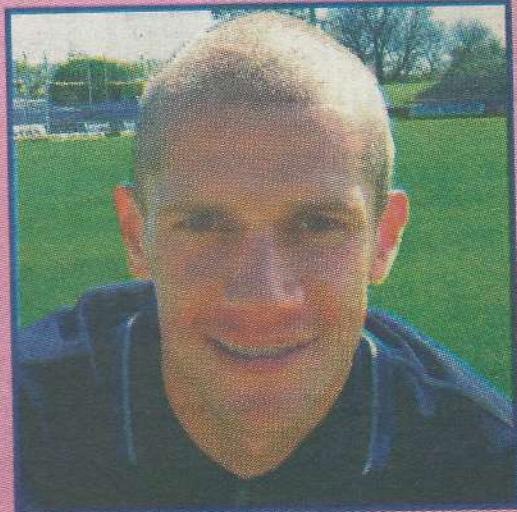
TEAMS:

SOUTH MELBOURNE: Petkovic, Iosifidis, De Amicis, Durakovic, Panopoulos, Trimboli (Liparoti 90), Coveny (Bacak 84), Sekulovski, Murdocca (Sabljak 70), Kisnorbo, Boutsianis.

BRISBANE STRIKERS: Kearton, Alagich (Drake 66), Stefanutto, McKain, McLaren, Grierson (Foster 70), Rech, Webber, Trajanovski, Carbone (McKay 56), Heath.

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Vaughan Coveny: The Kiwi striker bagged a brace in Souths two-nil home win in the 1st Elimination Leg Semi-Final against the Brisbane Strikers. His first was a converted penalty while his second was a cool finish that gave Strikers custodian Jason Kearton no chance.

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS OLYMPIC SHARKS

VENUE:

Knights Stadium.

CROWD: 3,421.

REFEREE: M. Breeze.

CAUTIONS: S Ognenovski (MK) 42, S Laybutt (OS) 52, A Juric (OS) 81.

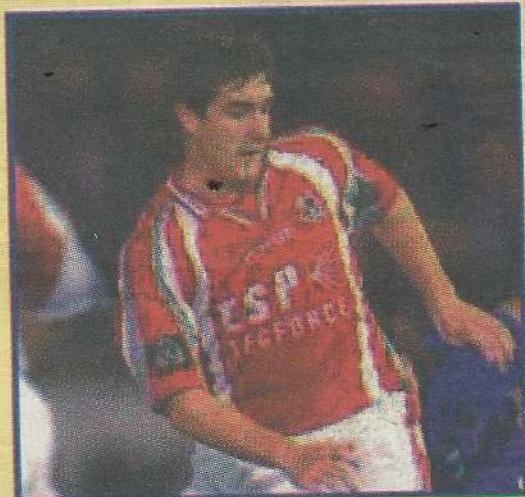
TEAMS:

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: John, R Vargas, Ognenovski, Horvat, Marth, Marusic, Porter, Da Costa, Kiratzoglou, A Vargas, De Jesus (Sulemani 87).

OLYMPIC SHARKS: Bolton, Laybutt, Wilson (Kohler 89), Podeljak, Halpin, North, Owens, Milicic (Harris 80), Packer, Durante, Juric.

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Joel Porter: The Melbourne Knights star was always a menace and had many chances to give his side that vital goal to break the dead-lock between the pair. His awareness on the pitch making brilliant runs and holding play up was just one of the many talents this young star possesses.

END OF SEASON TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. PERTH GLORY	24	16	17	1	52	23	55
2. NEWCASTLE UNITED	24	10	12	2	33	21	42
3. OLYMPIC SHARKS	24	12	4	8	37	24	40
4. BRISBANE STRIKERS	24	10	7	7	40	33	37
5. SOUTH MELBOURNE	24	10	6	8	30	22	26
6. MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	24	11	3	10	41	40	36
7. PARRAMATTA POWER	24	10	4	10	34	30	34
8. NORTHERN SPIRIT	24	9	7	8	36	39	34
9. MARCONI STALLIONS	24	8	6	10	32	36	30
10. WOLLONGONG WOLVES	24	6	7	11	28	43	25
11. SYDNEY UNITED	24	6	6	12	27	37	24
12. ADELAIDE CITY FORCE	24	4	8	12	27	39	20
13. KINGZ FC	24	3	5	16	28	58	14

LEADING GOALSCORERS

Name	Club	Total
MORI Damian	Perth Glory	17
MILICIC Ante	Olympic Sharks	15
CARDOZO Pablo	Northern Spirit	14
FOSTER Paul	Brisbane Strikers	13
DESPOTOVSKI Bobby	Perth Glory	12
PORTER Joel	Melbourne Knights	11
BROWNIE Royce	Marconi	11
DA COSTA Toto	Melbourne Knights	11

SATURDAY APRIL 20

1ST LEG MAJOR SEMI FINAL (MATCH A1)

(1) Perth Glory vs Newcastle United (2), Kick-Off: 7.00pm, Subiaco Oval

SUNDAY APRIL 21

2ND LEG ELIMINATION FINAL

(3) Olympic Sharks vs Melbourne Knights (6), Kick-Off: 6.30pm, Toyota Park

2ND LEG ELIMINATION FINAL

(4) Brisbane Strikers vs South Melbourne (5), Kick-Off: 3.00pm, Balmoral